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Cultural Proficiency For Indigenous Student Success

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Cultural Proficiency to Support Off-Reserve Indigenous Student Success

Organizational Improvement Plan

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Abstract

This Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP) is directed toward leveraging the position of the school principal toward changing hegemonic practices within a small rural school division that includes practices of meritocracy (hard work equals success) and color-blindness (refusing to see color in others) . These practices affect the academic achievement of the off-reserve Indigenous student- considered a provincial student by virtue of moving off reserve- thus receiving education from the provincial rather than federal, government. These students bring strong epistemologies and ontologies that are not currently acknowledged or employed by the dominant society and should be explored to determine how best to accommodate this group of marginalized students. This entails a social justice imperative to champion for the disadvantaged, marginalized and othered in a small, rural school division. Furthermore, culturally proficient leadership is explored as one way to advocate for this group of students through the creation of culturally proficient schools, led by culturally proficient leaders who value students because of their diversity rather than in spite of it. Both transformational and transformative leadership are considerations for building staff capacity to address dominant practices within these schools. This plan explores underlying causes that obfuscate the successful achievement of this group of students as demonstrated by lack of high academic achievement and high social emotional success, as measured by provincial assessment data. Social justice leadership, cultural proficiency and transformational and transformative leadership are areas of exploration as possible solutions to address the lack of achievement of this group of students.

Keywords: Indigenous, off-reserve, hegemonic practices, color-blindness, meritocracy, social justice, cultural proficiency, transformational leadership, transformative leadership, strategic activism.

Executive Summary

This Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP) considers the school's role in the development and leadership of cultural proficiency (Lindsey, Robins & Terrell, 2003; Nuri-Robins, Lindsey, Terrell & Lindsey, 2007) as the means through which to effect radical change within a small, rural, school division within the Prairie Provinces. With its organizational vision set firmly towards all students learning and being successful, it behooves Prairie School Division (PSD) to provide training for all staff in cultural proficiency to ensure off-reserve Indigenous students within its boundaries are afforded the opportunity to experience success because of who they are rather than in spite of it. Learning about Indigenous epistemologies and ontologies is one piece of the plan; however, training must take place in such a way that assures both the meaning and practice of the values of cultural proficiency are institutionalized within PSD. Schein's (1992, 1996) work will be utilized to determine a definition of organizational culture for school principals to facilitate an understanding of how culture shapes a school, and to mitigate the dangers of sub or counter cultures that may work against them in effecting radical change within the school.

Theoretical frameworks from the organizational change field include The Change Path Model (Cawsey, Deszca, & Ingols, 2016), the Congruence Model (Nadler & Tushman, 1980), and Four Frames for Reframing Organizations (Bolman & Deal, 2013). Terrell & Lindsey's (2009) training model will be used to transmit the five essential elements of Cultural Proficiency, including assessing the culture, valuing diversity, managing the dynamics of differences, adapting to diversity and institutionalizing cultural knowledge. Finally, Bustamante & Nelson's (2007) School Cultural Competency Observation Checklist (SCCOC) will be the tool through which to monitor changes as the school division moves forward in addressing the needs of the off-reserve Indigenous student through the development of culturally proficient schools.

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Chapter 1: Introduction and Organizational Context

Introduction

This Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP) focuses on K-12 public education, within a small rural school division, situated within a prairie province. The division spans hundreds of kilometers, and is characterized by small farming communities, and other communities that feed into the oil and gas industry. Prairie School Division (PSD) consists of more than twenty schools, serving approximately 3000 students, including mainstream schools, Outreach schools, and several Mennonite schools and Hutterite Brethren schools. All schools offer the core subjects as well as Fine arts, trades training courses, and numerous farm related courses, such as Field Crop Production and Dairy Production, at the appropriate grade level and school. Select community schools offer French Immersion programming. All schools employ certified and support staff to accommodate complex needs students, predominantly within inclusive classroom environments. Technology is ubiquitous within PSD. Many schools offer extra-curricular sports programs that include volleyball, basketball, badminton, and football.

Vision, Mission, Values, Purpose, and Goals

Adhering to the provincial government mandate of parent choice in education, PSD's vision is for students to choose its schools over all others as it offers dynamic school communities, focused on student success (Three Year Education/AERR Report, 2016-2019). This vision reflects the division's neoliberalism, grounded in market economy competitiveness, by espousing to be inclusive, responsive and student centered (Harvey, 2007). The Mission statement, used prolifically within the division, claims that everybody will learn together and be successful. The values of the division focus on pride in education, respect and integrity, student centered learning and the celebration of diversity. Finally, divisional goals adhere to government mandate and consist of five outcomes. 1) students are successful; 2) the achievement gap between Indigenous students and all

other students is eliminated; 3) the education system is inclusive; 4) the province has excellent teachers, school and school authority leaders, and 5) the education system is well governed and managed. These goals reflect the neo-liberal influence (Hursh, 2001) of the government through an accountability process that requires an annual evaluation of the goals grounded in targets and measures.

Organization Context

The school division has experienced a steady 2% decline in enrolment in recent years as children from the predominantly farming communities have left for the larger cities leaving behind a greater percentage of off-reserve Indigenous, Mennonite and Hutterite families, as well as a smattering of immigrant populations in the area (see Table 1). A board of Trustees governs the division and a small central office staff consisting of a superintendent, several secondary level superintendents, and various levels of supervisors and managers, administer the day-to-day work of the division, which oversees over five hundred staff. In recent years, the division has modified its site-based management model to reflect more centralized services that allow school principals to devote more time to instructional leadership.

Currently 25% of the division's population is off-reserve Indigenous students, characterized as such by virtue of living off of the reserve, thus coming under the jurisdiction of the provincial government, rather than the federal government. (Student Information System, 2016). Many of these students come from single-family homes, and are living in poverty (Canada Census, 2011). PSD's focus is on high levels of literacy and numeracy for all students through a Response to Intervention model (RTI), based on the work of Buffum, Mattos, and Weber, (2009). This model espouses certain access for all students to support their learning, collective responsibility of all school staff for the needs of each student, concentrated instruction on the essential knowledge and

skills needed for mastery learning, and convergent assessment to determine if instruction is meeting the needs of each student (p. 9-10).

Inclusive education practices characterize Prairie School Division, using the above noted RTI model. The Combined 3YER/AERR Report (2016-2019), a government-mandated document for tracking and reporting provincial assessment and survey results, employs Outcome Two as a clear call to action for the elimination of the achievement gap between Indigenous students and all other students. It reads: "OUTCOME TWO: The systemic education achievement gap between First Nations, Métis and Inuit students and all other students is eliminated" (Policy and Requirements for School Board Planning and Results Reporting, 2017, p. 8). Currently Indigenous students are supported to acquire foundational literacy and numeracy skills when found lacking in these areas. Moreover, although this model renders some success with this cultural group, it does not, nor was it ever intended to, address Indigenous ontologies and epistemologies in ways of learning, thus ignoring how Indigenous students learn, compared to hegemonic practices of the dominant culture. This is evidenced by the propagation of Eurocentric languages, science and mathematics (Battiste, 2002). For a myriad of reasons, the off-reserve Indigenous student attending PSD cannot be counted among those who benefit from current practices within the division (Accountability Pillar Results, 2016).

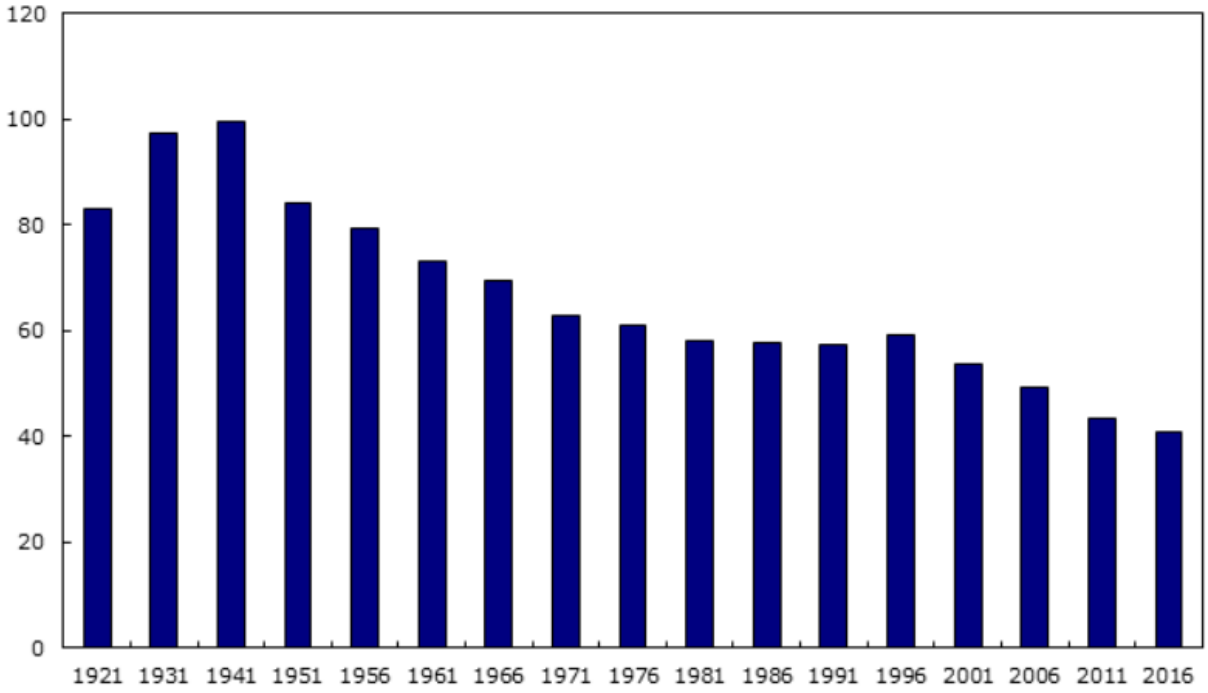
Schools also use the national *Our School Survey* tool to gain insights into students' beliefs about program offerings, course rigor, mental health and wellness, and teacher advocacy. This data is used at the school level, to assist in academic program planning as well as wrap-around services for students, including counselling services and tutoring.

A review of the dominant ideological framework characterizing the PSD workplace is considered through both the Superintendent's office and its schools. Historically, this small, rural school division has seen great stability in its Population of predominantly farm children of eastern

European descent, and children of civil servants and other professionals. However, the recent decline in children from farming communities caused by the decline in the family farm (see Table 1), has resulted in greater heterogeneity of students, including Indigenous, Mennonite and Hutterite students. This has been unsettling for a small, rural, school division that has historically enjoyed high results on government assessments and low levels of social and emotional upheaval.

Table 1

Total number of agricultural operations, 1921-2016



Note. Statistics Canada, Total number of agricultural operations, 1921-2016, May 17, 2017. Reproduced with the permission of Statistics Canada.

A Conservative ideology that previously dominated the landscape of the division has arguably been replaced by a Neo-liberal ideology resulting from government policy entrenched in the market economy (Harvey, 2005; Hursh, 2001). This perhaps more so because of the preponderance of the oil and gas industry in the area, coupled with a heavy government emphasis on the trades through the proliferation of trades training courses. Nevertheless, the infusion of the Indigenous culture has caused upheaval in the traditional system enjoyed by so many for so long.

In addition to central office practices, schools hold more firmly to a conservative ideology, grounded in tradition, the collective experience, and order and discipline (Gutek, 1997). Within PSD schools, Indigenous students experience inequities through deficit ideologies amongst school staff that are indicative of a conservative ideology such as meritocracy, meaning there is a belief that success is directly related to ability, hard work, and achievement (Gooden, 2010; Howard, 2010; and Milner, 2012). This belief exists in Prairie School Division as personally experienced through conversations with school leaders, teachers and supervisors, and through an examination of individual school attendance and student discipline policies that are intolerant of seemingly poor work habits, sporadic attendance and lack of ability that the off-reserve Indigenous student may exhibit. Colour-blindness also appears to exist within the school division, possibly contributing to further racism. This occurs when staff, taking a privileged position, choose to see students aside from their colour, and thus ignoring the lived experiences of these students that contribute to inequities experienced because of race (Banks, 2001; Howard, 2010; and Milner, 2012).

Finally, the Indigenous parent voice in PSD is silent. Generational effects of residential schools' experiences through such things as cognitive imperialism, that prefers the language, knowledge and culture of one group to others, and convinces other groups that this is normal and ideal (Battiste, 1998, p. 20), impedes their ability to interact with current day education systems without suspicion and fear (Lamalle, 2015). This alone conjures the need for change.

Leadership Position Statement

Hegemonic school practices socialize the off-reserve Indigenous student into tacit agreement that dominant group norms such as stringent attendance policies and multiple choice testing are what is important and valued in schools In conducting research into these practices, I as the Deputy Superintendent of Schools for PSD, situate myself within the sociological framework of the radical humanist/radical structuralist paradigms. According to Hartley (2010), the former speaks to

radicalization of individual consciousness, while the latter seeks to change structures in a radical manner. (p. 276). I acknowledge that in establishing a new radical model of reality, to honor other ways of knowing, such as "tribal epistemologies" (Kovach, 2010, p. 57), I must be willing to question the accepted norms of the existing research, to better elucidate the role of school leadership in the success of off-reserve Indigenous students within a public education system. Additionally, accepting what Gunter (2005), espouses in conceptualizing research in educational leadership would be to legitimize the dynamism of the field, and reduce vulnerability to hegemony and external interference, by taking hold of, and celebrating, competing conceptualizations of the truth. As an educational leader, I must be conscious of the injustices and inequities in education and act toward changing them. This can only happen if I am willing to stand up for the rights of marginalized and disadvantaged families and students and empower the marginalized to meaningfully contribute toward a changed system that accepts the participation and contributions of all (Ryan, 2006, p.7).

Three leadership values emerge from the above statements: social justice, a combination of transformational and transformative leadership, and cultural proficiency. A closer look at each leadership value provides evidence of why they should be considered for the work of this OIP.

1. **Social Justice Leadership**. Ayers, in response to the question "What is the purpose of education?" States:

> The purpose of education in a democracy is thoroughly social and radically individual: to achieve the fullest development of each- …as the necessary condition for the full development of the entire community, and conversely, to realize the fullest development of all as essential for the full development of each. (As cited in Griffiths & Portelli, 2015, p. 3).

In achieving the fullest potential for both the individual and society, educational leadership for social justice must not just problematize what happens within the school, but also ensure praxis takes place (Freire, 2000). Bogotch (2000, p.10), affirms there is need for educational leaders and

educators to rise up and do right by students and their families, even if that means being punished by the dominant society. Ibrahim (as cited in Griffiths & Portelli, 2015) echoes these sentiments by explaining that, "equal access for all requires special treatment for some groups" (p.51). A contentious practice within the Prairie School Division is waiving extra curricular field trip fees for off-reserve Indigenous students while parents and select school staff believing it to be unfair to those families that have the ability to pay. It would be incumbent upon the school leader to educate those both within and without the school to understand that families who cannot pay for field trips still deserve equal opportunity for their children to experience enrichment activities grounded in curriculum. Clearly, the current challenge is for educational leadership practices to occur without as well as within schools (Bogotch, 2000 p.12). Educational leaders will have to overcome this 'inwardness' (Shields, 2014, p. 326) if they are to create socially just schools for students.

Leaders must also recognize the complexities involved in meeting the needs of off-reserve Indigenous students, and ensure others are willing and trained to help with change efforts. Transformational and transformative leadership are two social justice models that could address the Problem of Practice (POP).

2. Transformational and Transformative Leadership. A conflation of transformational and transformative leadership comprises the second model that can address the POP. Transformational leadership is leadership grounded in moral propose (Leithwood, Jantzi & Steinbach, 1999) to effect radical change. This occurs through facilitative and consensual leadership power and includes setting directions, developing people, and redesigning the organization (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006, p. 5). This model would develop leaders who have the mindset of wanting to transform, especially to address the off reserve Indigenous student's needs. These three goals of transformational leadership appear to be well-suited to this POP and will be

further explored as a possible solution to the lack of high levels of academic, social and emotional success of the off reserve Indigenous student within a small rural school division.

Combined with transformational leadership is the concept of transformative leadership (Shields, 2010), which has as its central preoccupation and emphasis, the twin concepts of critique and possibility (p. 569). Whereas transformational leadership concerns itself with improving organizational qualities, dimensions and effectiveness (Shields, 2010, p. 564), transformative leadership begins by challenging improper uses of privilege and power, such as meritocracy and colorblindness, which create or perpetuate injustice and inequity (p. 564). However, both are concerned with changing a current, less desirable state into a better, more just and equitable state. These two distinct, yet intertwined leadership concepts, can be utilized by school principals to enable and empower those that are willing to work together to eradicate practices that impede the attainment of high levels of academic, social and emotional success of off-reserve Indigenous students.

One final leadership concept that could address the POP is Cultural Proficiency.

3. Culturally proficient leadership. In addressing issues of power and equity, Lumby (2012) suggests it might be productive to develop staff cultural competency to challenge the status quo both within and without the school (p. 583). Furthermore, Lindsey, Nuri-Robins and Terrell (2009, p. 4) emphasize that, students will only be able to develop to their full potential if leaders embrace a paradigm shift that sees them moving away from cultural difference as problematic to learning how to effectively interact with other cultures. In working toward change, one leadership assumption would be that educational leaders must work against two deficit ideologies amongst school staff. Meritocracy, the belief that success results from ability and hard work (Gooden, 2010; Howard, 2010; and Milner, 2012) ignores existing structural inequalities, such as government assessments, and justifies elitism (Au, 2013), thus perpetuating the inability of the off-reserve

Indigenous student to gain high levels of academic and social and emotional success. In addition, the practice of colour-blindness does not afford off-reserve Indigenous students the opportunity to see themselves represented in curriculum. For example, little is known about the treaties Indigenous peoples entered into with the Canadian government, and what implications those treaties have on current day peoples, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous. Moreover, policy is mute and they are therefore not part of the dominant discourses of education (Iverson, 2007). Furthermore, deficit ideologies such as Eurocentrism, allow the dominant culture to hold fast to the values and experiences of the European system, thereby perpetuating the belief of the inferiority of other ways of knowing and being (Battiste, 2002), thus marginalizing the off-reserve Indigenous student whose epistemologies and ontologies are different from that of European thought.

Educational leadership within PSD cannot ignore "society's espousal of beliefs like colour-blindness and meritocracy…" as they "… leave inequitable structures and barriers unacknowledged and un-interrogated" (Spikes and Gooden as cited in Griffiths & Portelli, 2015, p. 60).

How, then, can educational leaders, faced with the myriad of hegemonic beliefs and practices within PSD schools and communities that work against social justice and cultural acceptance, effect change? First, the vision for building a strong foundation for effective change, clearly articulated and acted upon, through purposeful relationship building (Mullins, as cited in Morrison, 2013, p. 416), is a necessary component of change. Second, is the need to ensure that theory and practice are related and do not work against each other. Morrison (2013) notes, educational systems will have no affect if reacting to change is the norm. They must be at the forefront of change, which includes applying theoretical models to the system to ensure the entire system understands and supports change.

Knowing that a critical approach to educational change drives the work of this OIP, provides a better understanding of the current PSD paradigm (functionalist) that is resistant to change. Work

clearly must be directed toward changing PSD into a division that provides opportunity for this underrepresented group (critical) to be successful high school graduates.

Leadership Problem of Practice

The problem of practice (POP) under investigation in this Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP) is the disparity between off-reserve Indigenous student academic, social and emotional needs and hegemonic teacher practices. Within PSD, Indigenous students are not attaining high levels of academic achievement and social and emotional satisfaction equal to that of their non-Indigenous counterparts (see Table 2). Furthermore, there is a lack of school leadership knowledge and teacher skill, or desire, to engage the off-reserve Indigenous student in their learning in a way that will result in high student achievement levels, and high social and emotional satisfaction rates as reported on government assessment results.

Table 2

*Five Year Assessment Data 2011-2016 (Non Indigenous and Indigenous)**

Category	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
Non Indigenous Acceptable	73.0	73.4	70.5	69.6	66.3
Indigenous Acceptable	56.2	60.4	56.9	55.1	53.1
Non Indigenous Excellence	11.6	9.2	10.9	10.3	10.6
Indigenous Excellence	8.1	7.4	6.5	4.2	6.2

*Note. *Small student numbers can cause large fluctuations from year to year.*
Adapted from: PSD's Three Year Education/AERR Reports 2011-2016.

Framing the Problem of Practice

Using multiple perspectives to make sense of organizations expands managerial thinking, especially when viewed that they exist in a pluralistic manner, with a circular causality occurring within the organization (Bolman & Deal, 2013). This provides for an assortment of options to aid school administrators in supporting the off-reserve Indigenous student. Additionally, fundamental

forces influence how organizations react toward their environment (Cawsey, Deszca & Ingols, 2016). This is true of the forces affecting the education of off-reserve Indigenous students within PSD. Following is a brief overview of the historical forces affecting the academic success of the off-reserve Indigenous student within PSD.

Historical Overview of POP

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, hegemonic school practices such as meritocracy and colour-blindness impede the off-reserve Indigenous student's ability to achieve high levels of academic success and social and emotional satisfaction. Bolman & Deal's reframing theory considers the structural, human resources, political and symbolic frames to make sense of organizations and is used below to frame the POP.

Four Frames for Understanding Organizations

Structural Frame

The structural view emphasizes employing an appropriate array of formal roles and responsibilities to maximize people's performance on the job and minimize personal stagnation (Bolman & Deal, 2013, p, 45). This could be both an assist for organizational change within PSD and an obstacle toward it. Positional power could be used within a structural frame (Cawsey, Deszca & Ingols, 2013, p.187) to effect change to meet the needs of the off-reserve Indigenous student. Although this frame is concerned with the social architecture of work, and the establishment of a prototype that works best for both the people and the collective purpose of the organization (Bolman & Deal, 2013, p. 66), when it comes to positional power, directives could see work reduced to standard, facile practices, possibly obfuscating any deep, meaningful change. Consequently, the off-reserve Indigenous student could be hindered from attaining higher levels of achievement and social and emotional success. A greater consideration of organizational culture (Schein, 1996) where roles are more clearly defined, provides a better understanding of how

particular roles, such as office staff, teachers and principals, operate within a school, and can be persuaded to meaningfully work toward supporting the off-reserve Indigenous student. In moving forward with this OIP, it is critical to heed the advice of Cawsey, Deszca and Ingols (2013) when they say, "Change agents need to understand the effects of structures and systems from the perspective of the person who is on the receiving end of the change" (p. 171). Given that schools historically hold to a more conservative ideology, valuing tradition in particular, the challenge becomes one of educating staff on the importance of authentic and proven practices to assist the off-reserve Indigenous student in achieving success. Next is a consideration of the human resources frame.

Human Resources Frame

This frame highlights the relationship between organizations and people, based on the premise that an enterprise is made or broken by the skills, energy, attitudes, and commitments of its people (Bolman & Deal, 2013, p. 117). This frame appears highly desirable in facilitating change to address social injustices experienced by off-reserve Indigenous students within Prairie School Division. In its favor, PSD has highly dedicated administrators and staff who enjoy working for the division. Furthermore, they are open to inclusive practices and related professional learning to support high student achievement. Provincial accountability surveys (2016) reveal that almost all staff support all measures evaluated by the government in these areas. More local measures include teacher willingness to participate on various committees, such as, First Nation, Metis and Inuit, and the Reading Assessment Framework (RAF), a locally developed assessment for the five elements of reading. However, despite a genuine commitment to this work, the off-reserve Indigenous student continues to underperform in all measures of academic achievement assessed on government exams (see Table 2). Therefore, to question the teaching practices of school division personnel (Lumby,

2012) would be a critical step in analyzing how we better serve students who continue to be marginalized despite good intention. Following this frame is a review of the political frame.

Political Frame

Power and conflict characterize the political frame (Bolman & Deal, 2013). Coalitions consisting of groups and individuals with enduring differences in values, beliefs and interests, can be utilized to influence the off reserve Indigenous student's ability to find success. The political frame will challenge power dynamics within and without the school division. Key players and appropriate coalitions of change agents, in favor of adopting inclusive practices to create greater opportunities for the success of this group, can be formed. Coalitions of groups of individuals who do not recognize the need to change can be invited to participate in these groups, so that deficit ideologies are exposed and changed. Current positive attitudes toward off-reserve Indigenous students must also be capitalized on to eradicate conflicting attitudes of meritocracy and colour-blindness. Board policy and procedures epitomize the political frame.

Current Board Policy (BP) and Administrative Procedures (AP) (June 2016), reveal adherence to the provincial School Act and its regulations (2000 with amendments to 2015). Policies are the domain of The Board and provide direction for the school division; administrative procedures outline responsibilities for central office and school administrators to follow. Numerous examples can be provided that obfuscate the off-reserve Indigenous student's ability to achieve success in school. Policies, such as *Welcoming, Caring, Respectful and Safe Learning Environments,* and administrative procedures, such as *Multiculturalism,* inject a liberal context that sees the off-reserve Indigenous student as one of many rather than a singular group that played a significant role in the establishment of Canada. Within this OIP, board policies and administrative procedures must be re-examined as a means of revealing and rectifying the absence of the Indigenous perspective within a K- 12 public education system.

Finally, an exploration of the symbolic frame completes the four frames of organizational change.

Symbolic Frame

The symbolic frame, steeped in meaning rather than action (Bolman & Deal, 2013), is significant within PSD. The need to bind people within the organization is reflected in the division's culture, which ultimately needs to reflect its mission statement that everybody works together for success. This frame will play an important role in addressing the lack of success of the off reserve Indigenous student through the creation of a greater PSD spirit, collectively championing the needs of these students. The representation of cultural artifacts can only serve to educate the dominant society about the richness of the Indigenous culture and the rights these people hold. Treaty flags and teepees, positioned at all schools, will recognize the ancestral grounds of Indigenous peoples; eagle feather and Metis sash presentations will honor the milestone accomplishments of high school graduates; elders attending important events will link Indigenous peoples and the larger society; and, the acknowledgement of traditional territories before assemblies and special events, will all serve to illustrate the importance of this culture, and honor the value of the Indigenous student.

Using Bolman & Deal's four frames provides for a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics within an organization. In addition to understanding what is going on within an organization, it behooves PSD to pay heed to multiple forces that influence how organizations react toward their environment (Cawsey, Deszca & Ingols, 2016, p. 7). To do this requires a look at the political, economical, social, technological and environmental factors that bear pressure on the organization. This is a PESTE analysis.

PESTE Analysis

An examination of external environmental factors affecting PSD can be viewed through a PESTE analysis, which includes political, economic, social, technological, and environmental influences on this OIP. Following are political, economic, social and environmental considerations.

Political factors

Following the release of Canada's Truth and Reconciliation report (2015), politicians within the province responded to the call to address the injustices and inequalities suffered by Indigenous Peoples of Canada. Specifically, education is working towards the infusion of Indigenous culture into new curriculums with a clear message that Indigenous epistemologies are valid and furthermore, Indigenous peoples played a significant role in the formation of current day Canada. With political forces in its favor, the time is optimum to leverage PSD to effect radical changes in how off-reserve Indigenous students are taught, are supported to stay in school, and are accommodated, as their needs require. Current social climates, positively positioned toward Indigenous peoples, are at a climax in the country. Increasingly, stories of Indigenous women murdered and missing in Canada are emerging in the media, many of whom are involved in high-risk livelihoods. Keeping the Indigenous student, and in particular, females, in school, is crucial to ensuring this group is afforded the opportunity to experience educational success, allowing them to engage more fully in society. Environmental contexts, including the recent focus on cross-country pipelines, highlights another reason to ensure off reserve Indigenous students achieve academic success through high levels of academic, social and emotional achievement. As future community leaders, Indigenous students will need to be highly skilled in dealing with land and mineral rights, community development and infrastructure, and know how to reconcile their ways of knowing the land, with ways of enjoying the wealth their land can provide. Finally, the political landscape of PSD will need to be acknowledged as those in positions of power and influence could be charged

with instituting policy to better support high levels of off-reserve Indigenous student academic achievement, and social and emotional success within the division.

Economic factors

Economic considerations are also indicative of the need for radical changes within the school division. The province's economic prosperity created a worker shortage, sparking the Temporary Foreign Worker Policy (2009) that saw thousands of foreign workers arriving in the province to fill semi and unskilled jobs. Parallel to this is the Canada census data (2011) that reports the Indigenous Population is the fastest growing group in Canada at 3.4%. Moreover, since this group resides predominantly in the rural areas of the province, it becomes even more critical that changes occur if this group is to be afforded the opportunity to contribute to, and benefit from, the province's wealth.

Social factors

Current social climates, positively positioned toward Indigenous peoples, are at a climax in Canada and should be exploited to advantage the off-reserve Indigenous student within PSD. As the fastest growing and youngest demographic in Canada, Indigenous students need to know the contribution they can make toward society. High levels of academic achievement will enable off-reserve students to graduate high school and make informed choices about how to participate in any society they choose to live in. Furthermore, it will provide them the opportunity to take on roles such as teachers, lawyers, doctors, scientists and social workers, thus becoming role models for other Indigenous students to emulate. High levels of social and emotional satisfaction within PSD will provide a basis upon which off-reserve Indigenous students can proudly graduate high school and lead satisfying and productive lives either within or without the dominant society.

Environmental factors

Environmental contexts, including forestry, fish and wildlife are another reason to ensure off-reserve Indigenous students achieve high academic, and social and emotional success. As they become community leaders, off-reserve Indigenous students will need to be highly skilled in dealing with land and mineral rights, community development and infrastructure. They can be better positioned to champion for, and enact measures, that will ensure they are in control of their environment and become stronger stewards of their land.

In addition to PESTE factors, an analysis of both internal and external factors is required.

Analysis of Internal factors

Several internal sources are used in this OIP to illustrate the lack of high levels of achievement and social and emotional satisfaction for the off-reserve Indigenous student within PSD. In particular, data extracted from the government mandated Three Year Education/Annual Education Report, informs this OIP. Table 2 provides five-year data on percentages of Indigenous and non-Indigenous students attaining the acceptable level and standard of excellence level on government assessments. Staff can flexibly use this data to ensure balance is achieved between what the data says and how staff use it to construct meaning (Datnow & Park, 2009, p. 215). The *Our School* Surveys, a national survey tool, also provides valuable information on student social engagement, emotional health, and school context, and is disaggregated to reveal the self-reported results of the off-reserve Indigenous student. Table 3 offers one-year data on the social/emotional and mental health factors affecting middle and high school Indigenous and non-Indigenous students within PSD. This OIP will also use administrative procedures and divisional policy as examples of procedures that may inhibit off-reserve Indigenous students from attaining high levels of achievement and social and emotional success.

This table provides evidence that the off-reserve Indigenous student within PSD does not enjoy the same level of academic success or positive social emotional satisfaction as the non-Indigenous student.

Table 3

Our School, Middle-High School Survey Results, 2015-2016.

Category	Non Indigenous	Indigenous
Positive Relationships	71%	62%
Belonging	72%	64%
Anxiety	23%	30%
Depression	22%	29%
Positive Self Esteem	77%	68%
Advocacy at School	35%	37%
Positive Teacher Relations	68%	66%

Note. Adapted from PSD's Our School Middle-High School Survey Report

However, to say the division is making no attempt to address the needs of this group, would be unfair. Formative assessments are being reviewed and revised to be more inclusive of different learning styles; student behaviours and context are under investigation to determine more appropriate attendance practices; and more school counselors are being hired to specifically assist Indigenous students with career planning. While these strategies are being employed, it is still imperative that the division explores alternative ways of honoring and valuing the epistemologies and ontologies of the off-reserve Indigenous student within its boundaries, to ensure these students are afforded a greater opportunity to succeed.

In tandem with internal factors is an examination of external factors.

External Factors

Academic literature, Statistics Canada, and The Truth and Reconciliation Commission, are external data used throughout this OIP. *Calls to Action No. 62 and No. 63* from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (2015), are particularly germane to this OIP, calling for both post-secondary teacher education programs, and the K-12 education system, to provide teacher training in integrating Indigenous histories, knowledge and teaching methods into their classrooms. Table 4 below outlines the Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission**.**

These Calls to Action heighten the importance of this OIP, which must remain focused on addressing the disparity between hegemonic teacher practices and off-reserve Indigenous student needs, if any meaningful change is to occur within PSD. The Calls to Action are considered change drivers for this OIP and will be discussed in other parts of chapter one.

Table 4

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action

Call 62
We call upon the federal, provincial, and territorial governments, in consultation and collaboration with Survivors, Aboriginal peoples, and educators, to: • Make age-appropriate curriculum on residential schools, Treaties, and Aboriginal peoples' historical and contemporary contributions to Canada a mandatory education requirement for Kindergarten to Grade Twelve students • Provide the necessary funding to post-secondary institutions to educate teachers on how to integrate Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods into classrooms • Provide the necessary funding to Aboriginal schools to utilize Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods in classrooms • Establish senior-level positions in government at the assistant deputy minister level or higher dedicated to Aboriginal content in education
Call 63
We call upon the federal, provincial, and territorial governments, in consultation and collaboration with Survivors, Aboriginal peoples, and educators, to: • Developing and implementing Kindergarten to Grade Twelve curriculum and learning resources on Aboriginal peoples in Canadian history, and the history and legacy of residential schools • Sharing information and best practices on teaching curriculum related to residential schools and Aboriginal history • Building student capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy, and mutual respect • Identifying teacher-training needs relating to the above.

Note. Calls to Action: Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2015.

Personal Perspective/Positionality

This study explores an activist approach that leadership may take with regard to changing the hegemonic practices of a small, rural, school division that perpetuates barriers to the achievement of the off-reserve Indigenous students attending this public-school system. Strategic Activism is characterized by small scale, ordinary and personal activities that have an impact on the organization. Ryan (2010) outlines elements of strategic activism that is applicable to my work as the Deputy Superintendent. I have allegiance to the school division, am visible within the system, and am proud of the many accomplishments taking place.

Politically perceptive leaders strategically position themselves in ways that enable them to take actions not always favored by the majority. Maintaining a low profile allows me to enact important changes without drawing undo attention to the cause. In my position, I have experienced first-hand, the deficit ideologies that proliferate in schools and, to some degree, within the school board itself. In addition, although I have agency to issue directives for change, resistance from the dominant group could jeopardize any change efforts. Being strategic ultimately optimizes effectiveness. Credibility is another strategic move that enables me to effect change. Demonstrating a faithfulness to the system, being compliant with administrative duties, and establishing competency through knowledge will serve to establish me as a legitimate and trustworthy member of the system, thus moving the dominant group forward through a proven record of accomplishment of successful reform. As Kotter (1996, p. 97) advocates, change agents must be able to "walk the talk, or lead by example." Finally, building strong relationships with colleagues will position me to take suitable action to promote social justice.

In taking action, a successful leader first aligns herself to the powers within the organization to demonstrate fidelity to the values of the organization that allows her to work with, rather than against, the system. Second, indirectly sowing the seeds of an idea or practice removes the stigma

of confrontation, thus facilitating greater and quicker acceptance of that idea or practice. Taking a stand for social justice is the final component of activism. Simply put, despite efforts to be subtle about effecting change, there are times when it is necessary to address power imbalances by taking a stand against the organization (Ryan, 2016).

Strategic activism could be the best chance to promote an agenda for change that sees success for off-reserve Indigenous students.

Questions from the Problem of Practice

This POP presents an issue that requires the answer to three questions: Why does the dominant society need to change its practices to accommodate the needs of the off-reserve Indigenous student? What needs to change to better accommodate the academic, social, and emotional success of the off-reserve Indigenous student? And, how does such change occur? The shift in Indigenous demographics away from reserves to more urban centers; the fact that the Indigenous Population is the fastest growing in Canada; and the need to recognize Indigenous Peoples through the Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, are all compelling reasons for why changes must occur. The off-reserve Indigenous student must be afforded the opportunity to experience academic success and social and emotional satisfaction enjoyed by their non-Indigenous peers; something not currently happening in PSD's Eurocentric style education system. Considering Indigenous epistemologies and ontologies are vastly different to that of the western world, what needs to change is hegemonic school practices to accommodate a different worldview that is both legitimate and valuable within the dominant society. This could look like utilizing the work of Sieta and Bentro (2002) with the Positive Youth Development approach that works from a strengths based philosophy including connections, community, dignity and opportunity.

Finally, how to change is of utmost importance as social justice, organizational culture, and cultural proficiency are all factors for consideration when attempting radical change within a system that has enjoyed control over this marginalized group for many years. With a radical change agenda, it will be important to ensure that all stakeholders are aware of the why of change, and how the change can occur. Moreover, administrators and staff will need support and training in effecting the changes needed. Once the rationale for change, or the why of change is understood and training begins, all schools will be in a better position to begin to adopt processes that recognize and respect the Indigenous perspective, and afford these students the opportunity to experience success. Leadership will need to sustain its support to this end. To ensure these practices take hold and have an effect, statistical data from government plans, Our School Surveys data, and data from a cultural auditing tool, that will be explored further on in this OIP, will be used to track progress toward success.

Challenges and Limitations

English (2008) reminds us that as leaders, we must first seek to understand our own worldviews or "mental prisms" (p. 53) before we can seek to effect change in others. This is a critical consideration within this OIP where my positional power, although a possibility, will be leveraged toward building strong relationships, strong coalitions and offering a level of expertise spanning thirty-five years of working and living in Indigenous communities, to address the lack of success of the off-reserve Indigenous student. Being cognizant of my own values, morals and deficit ideologies (Begley & Stefkovich, 2004, p. 135) brought to the OIP, is critical to moving leaders toward the goal of off-reserve Indigenous student success.

Defining and then addressing what school, or organizational culture, means within the context of this OIP also presents a challenge. According to Lumby (2012), organizational culture is difficult to define and little has been done to address the ethical issues involved in it. Schein (1996)

speaks to the complex interplay of the shared norms, values and functions that contribute to understanding how organizational culture functions. These go beyond artificial abstractions that do not always result in the correct assessment of how the culture of organization at all levels functions and promotes or impedes the success of the off-reserve Indigenous student. To understand the forces at work -for and against- the implementation of strategies to address this will be paramount to ensuring meaningful changes take place within this school division.

The ninety-four "Calls to Action" from the Truth and Reconciliation Report (2015) provide the impetus to address the injustices committed toward Indigenous Peoples of Canada, and provinces are moving forward with plans for action, especially in the field of education. These actions could interfere with this OIP, simply because action does not always equate to meaningful change. The frenzy created by The Report could be reduced to the teachings of anthropological artifacts such as beads, buffalo and bannock (Battiste, 1998) because of lack of deep knowledge of Indigenous cultures and their epistemologies and ontologies. Vigilance will be required to ensure changes are meaningful and rooted in Indigenous ways of knowing and being.

Finally, caution must be exercised when using government assessments specific to Indigenous student achievement as small sampling sizes can greatly affect results from one year to the next. As well, that these assessments are created within a Eurocentric lens also disadvantages the Indigenous student whose worldview is different from the dominant view. Five-year roll-up data (See Table 2) for both exit level and performance measure tests will comprise the data used to measure change within the school division.

Gap between Current and Future State

In addressing a problem of practice, Archbald (2013), presents his concept of a gap analyses as the ability of a leader to conceptualize the gap between the current, problematic state, and the desired future state; analyze factors contributing to the gap; and communicate the vision for change

(p. 139). Applying this to the stated problem of practice would see a desired future state where Indigenous students in this school division perform at the highest levels of academic achievement and have high levels of social and emotional success. The division's Annual Education Results Report (AERR) (2016), addresses nine measures specifically addressing Indigenous student performance. Current results indicate that only 59.7% of Indigenous students complete high school within three years of entering grade 10. The dropout rate for this group within RSD is 5.5%, woefully below that of the division rate of 3.3%. Exit test results are equally low with only 53.1% of students passing these exams, and a discouraging number of Indigenous students achieving a standard of excellence (6.2%).

Indigenous students' ontologies, or ways of being, and epistemologies, or ways of knowing, are valid and must be valued (Our Words, Our Ways, 2005). Acknowledging their ways of knowing and being as strengths, not weaknesses (Terrell & Lindsey, in Griffith and Portelli, 2015, p. 123) is a moral obligation for this small rural school division. Focus needs to center on the creation of learning paths for this group that will lead to high levels of achievement and positive social and emotional outcomes as measured on provincial assessments.

Change Drivers

Change efforts must employ the right drivers in action to effect meaningful change. Fullan and Quinn (2016) present four components of action that culminate in coherence, through focusing direction, cultivating collaborative cultures, deepening meaning and securing accountability (p. 3). The change effort within PSD originates with senior leadership; consequently, change efforts must be focused, and accomplished through coherence. This can be accomplished by first, focusing direction by integrating component parts within schools into the whole of the division. Furthermore, strong groups and strong individuals must be cultivated to effect the necessary changes. This could occur simultaneously through the employment of transformational leadership

using the Change Path Model. This would involve using diverse groups to provide complete perspectives on change. Deepening meaning needs to occur within pedagogy through partnerships with Indigenous agencies and cultural experts as well as various government education departments to ensure the needs of the off-reserve Indigenous student are met by teachers with foundational training in Indigenous epistemologies and ontologies, such as through cultural proficiency noted earlier. Finally, capacity must be built amongst school staff to ensure accountability is embraced as a responsibility of everybody involved in the changes. This would be accomplished through ownership of the government achievement results.

Leadership-Focused Vision for Change

Change Path Model

Cawsey, Deszca and Ingols (2016) present a model for organizational change that is applicable to a small, rural, school division that does not meet the needs of its off-reserve Indigenous students. The Change Path Model (p. 53) presents a framework for both the *how* and *what* to change to improve an organization's effectiveness, and focuses on praxis which aligns with my vision of the change process needed to ensure the off-reserve Indigenous student is afforded every opportunity to experience high success. This model will also be referenced later in this document as part of a communication plan. The Change Path Model combines process and prescription, illustrated through a series of steps.

Step 1. Awakening. Begins with a Critical Organizational Analysis that allows the change leader to scan both the internal and external environments to understand the particular forces for and against the organizational shift (p. 53).

Step 2. Mobilization. This is found in significant actions that makes sense of the desired change, assesses power and cultural dynamics to build coalitions for greater change, both communicate the

need for change and move it forward, and finally, leverage the change leader's personality, knowledge, skills and abilities for the benefit of change and its implementation.

Step 3. Acceleration. In this stage, all information from the previous two steps is considered, as a detailed plan is activated in order to implement the changes.

Step 4. Institutionalization. This stage involves the creation of a new state. Progress monitoring is an integral part of this transition. Although the Change Path Model appears to be linear in form, it is not. External and internal conditions are constantly changing and a change leader must be ready to manage such transitions.

The benefits in implementing a Change Path Model to effect change within a small, rural school division to create pathways to success for the off reserve Indigenous student, are considerable. This model provides for *what* to change, and for *how* to change, which is imperative in addressing the internal forces within this school division that continue to cloud the opportunity for this group of students to attain high levels of achievement, and social and emotional satisfaction. Next is a review of the factors that indicate PSD's readiness for change.

Organizational Change Readiness

Change Readiness

Generally, PSD has had positive experiences with change. The division employs the RTI model of supports to improve the achievement of all students. High School Redesign (HSR), a strategic movement for improving high school completion rates, and based on nine principles of action (Friesen et al., 2015), has been operating for four years within the division, and is showing promising results for high school completion, particularly for Indigenous students. One such change sees Indigenous students involved in a credit recovery program that allows them to retake a portion of a course for credits rather than completing the whole course again. As the Deputy Superintendent I have been intimately involved in this process to ensure staff, students and parents

understand the reasoning behind credit recovery and the opportunity it affords struggling students. I will release this responsibility to school principals beginning in the 2018-2019 school year.

As part of the provincial mandate to "eliminate the achievement gap between FNMI and all other students," (Three Year Education Plan, 2016-2019) PSD receives differential funding to enable such action. With nearly 25% of the 3000 student population self identifying as First Nation, Metis or Inuit, PSD is positively positioned to support changes toward cultural proficiency with a yearly budget of over $750,000.00. This has enabled the division to hire workers in schools to work directly with off-reserve Indigenous students, purchase resources to promote Indigenous cultures, afford substitute and travel costs for both an FNMI Steering Committee and a professional learning committee (PLC) to both set direction for the division and carry out the direction, and to support cultural training within the area. As a result of committee work and early training, most schools have a dedicated champion who will be the designated person advocating for cultural proficiency within their schools and will work closely with administrators in effecting changes.

Senior executive and supervisors are directly leading the changes outlined in the Three Year Education Plan (2016-2019). School principals are enacting the change efforts, collaborating on professional development to that effect. To address the problem of practice PSD would embed cultural proficiency training in leadership programs. Doing so would provide professional development that would aid school leaders in learning more about the important role culture plays in education (Howard, cited in Spikes & Goodwin in Griffiths & Portelli 2016, p. 62), thus becoming better equipped to support the unique needs of Indigenous populations in ways that will promote high levels of academic achievement. (Lindsey, Robins, & Terrell, cited in Spikes & Goodwin in Griffiths & Portelli, 2015, p. 62).

Culturally proficient leaders will build school cultures that positively affect the academic achievement of students of color. Staff efficacy (Smith, 2005, p. 29) will become a greater focus for principals, as will parental involvement in decisions concerning their children.

In preparing to effect radical change within a small, rural school division, a consideration of the many factors involved in this change is necessary. Two different but intertwined types of analysis, Force Field and Stakeholder, can be effectively employed

Force Field Analysis, Stakeholder analysis

In addition to creating a vision and strategy (Kotter, in Cawsey, et. al, 2016), for change within RSD, discovering how people, structures, and systems respond to change is critical to understanding the change process. Recognizing that organizational culture (Schein, 1996) plays a significant role in how a system operates, two tools for establishing such an understanding are the Force Field Analysis, and the Stakeholder Analysis.

Force Field Analysis

A force field analysis (Cawsey, et. al, 2016, p. 196) will better illustrate how to make the change process more effective in creating a new vision for off-reserve Indigenous student success. Four types of change characterize a force field analysis and include continuous or constant change, high resistance change, breakpoint change, and flip-flop change. Using Strebel's "Change Arena", model (cited in Cawsey, et. al, 2016, p. 198) to plot how people, systems and structures are affected by, and affect, change, increases knowledge of the forces and their strengths working both for and against change, thus better anticipating ways of modifying forces in favor of the academic, social and emotional success of the off-reserve Indigenous student within PSD. In conducting a Force Field Analysis, there will need to be time to both conduct the analysis and to review it. As well, finances will be allocated toward personnel to conduct this work.

While force field analysis concerns itself with identifying and analyzing, driving and restraining forces to alter those forces to accomplish a change, another type of analysis makes a non-linear determination of the positions, motives, and the power of all key stakeholders. This is called a stakeholder analysis.

Stakeholder Analysis

Leaders employ a Stakeholder Analysis (Cawsey, et al., 2016, p. 198) to understand the key players who influence the outcome of a change, thereby better positioning themselves to appreciate these positions and how best to manage them and the context. Savage et al. (2016, p. 63) establish two dimensions of stakeholders- one recognizing them as threats, the other as supporters. Plotting them on a map identifies those who are the focus of the change. Is it the school principal, teachers, support staff or the politicians? Next would be to identify those with power, influence and interest in the school. Knowing what motivates people helps in the change process. Developing a better understanding of who the most important stakeholders are and work toward winning their support is the final stage of a stakeholder analysis. Because both types of analysis are irrevocably intertwined through the dynamics of organization, it is anticipated that one will be reflected in the other at certain times.

Chapter one introduced the organizational context and the problem of practice of this OIP. It also outlined possible models for effecting radical change within the organization and reviewed different types of analysis through which to chart the change process. Chapter 2 will focus on planning and development for leading the change process.

Chapter 2: Planning and Development

As noted in chapter one, conducting research into hegemonic practices in schools that affect the success or failure of the off-reserve Indigenous student in attaining high academic achievement and social and emotional satisfaction, I ground myself within the sociological framework of the

radical humanist/radical structuralist paradigms. According to Hartley (2010), "…whereas research within the radical humanist paradigm is about the radicalization of individual consciousness…that within the radical structuralist paradigm seeks to change structures in a radical manner" (p. 27).

The framework for change is viewed through transformative leadership; using a critical transformative approach to changing schools toward becoming more inclusive for all students and their families (Shields, 2014). A critical organizational analysis follows using Bolman and Deal's (2013) four frames theory to understand the structural, human resources, political and symbolic influences on the organization, with a particular focus on human resources as the dominant frame for leadership. Cultural proficiency (Terryl, Robins & Lindsey, 2009) will be the primary solution through which to assist school leaders to both recognize the power imbalances within their schools and to assist them in understanding the importance of embracing off-reserve Indigenous students because of, rather than in spirit of, their diversity. Finally, Strategic Activism (Ryan, 2016), or activism concerned with changing a less desirable situation into a fairer one through small scale and less confrontational means, should ensure changes take place that will provide for greater social justice within a system.

Framework for Leading the Change Process

Critical theory seeks the betterment of society by ensuring equity and justice for all (Friere, 2000; Starratt, 1991; Shields, 2010). Education within this ideology is challenged to incorporate theory and practice into one process called praxis (Bogotch, 2000). Educational leaders must be conscious of the injustices and inequities and act toward changing them. This theory appears most compatible with my Problem of Practice (POP), as it addresses issues of inequity and injustice. An examination of the off-reserve Indigenous student in a public education system would reveal the disparity between their levels of academic success and social and emotional satisfaction, impeded by Eurocentric teaching methodologies such as a preponderance of paper and pencil activities to

elicit understanding from students who operate through an oral tradition . The critical lens is the dominant lens of the POP. This resulting from years of experience working with marginalized Indigenous students in public education systems, and witnessing their struggle to find a place in an off-reserve education system that is entrenched in Western European practices. A critical paradigm subscribes to radical change, which views society from the perspective of radical change, structural conflict, and modes of domination, contradiction, emancipation, deprivation and potentiality (Burrell & Morgan, 1979, p. 32).

Validity of Theory to Address the POP.

Within Prairie School Division (PSD), the needs of the wider community, especially those of the off-reserve Indigenous student, require greater attention if this marginalized group is to experience more success. Transformative leadership (Shields, 2010, 2014), grounded in critical leadership theory for social justice, with undertones of Starratt's (1991) ethic of critique, ethic of justice and ethic of caring, will be used to expand leadership thinking toward changing the very nature of the school.

Critical Organizational Analysis

In addressing a problem of practice, Archbald (2013) presents his concept of gap analysis as the ability of a leader to conceptualize the gap between the current, problematic state, and the desired future state; analyze factors contributing to the gap; and communicate the vision for change (p. 139). Applying this to the stated POP would see a desired future state where off-reserve Indigenous students in this small rural school division experience success.

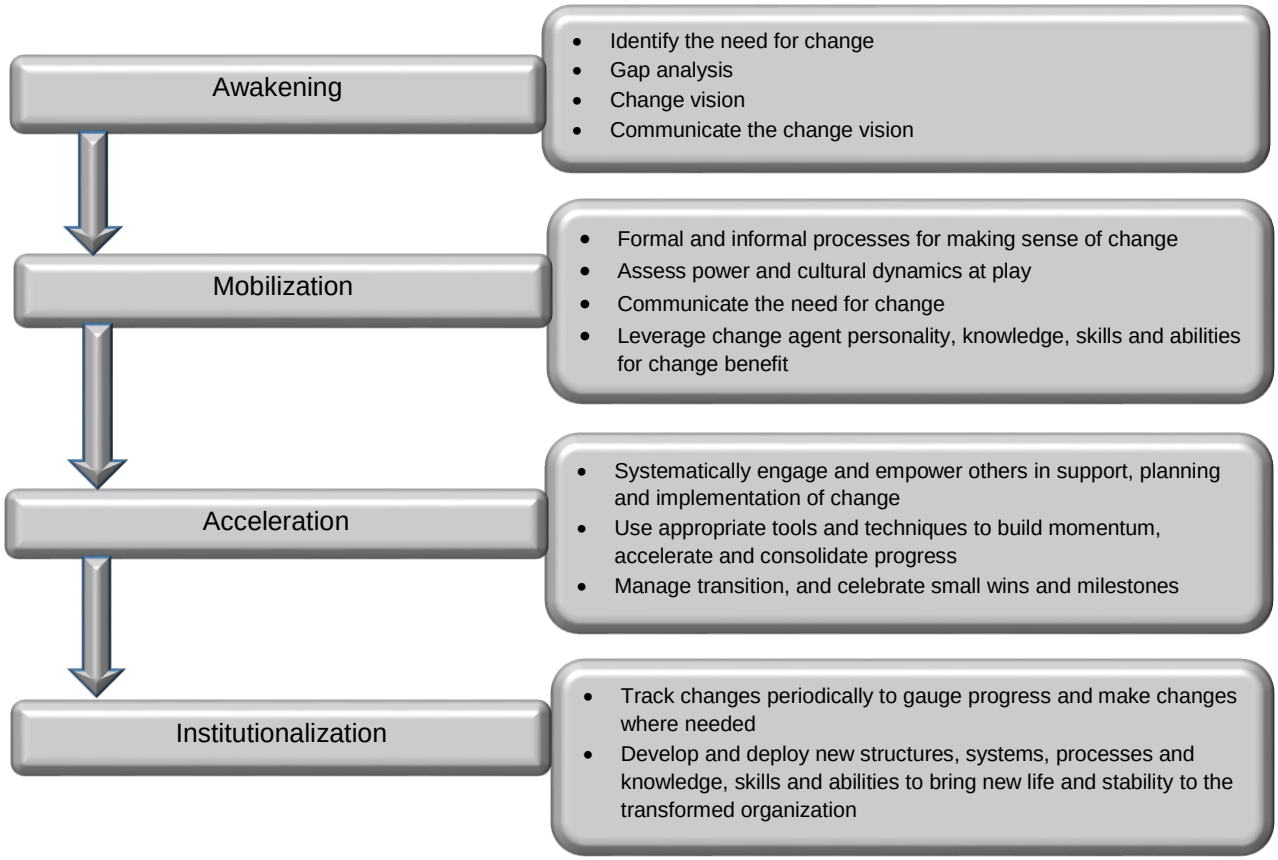
Relevant Theories of Organizational Change

Cawsey, Deszca and Ingols (2016) present a model for organizational change that resonates with me as the Deputy Superintendent of PSD. The Change Path Model (p. 53) presents a framework for both the *how* and *what* to change to improve an organization's effectiveness, and focuses on praxis, which aligns with my vision of the change needed to address the POP. The Change Path Model (Figure 1) combines process and prescription and is illustrated through a series of four stages: Awakening, Mobilization, Acceleration, and Institutionalization.

The first step (Awakening) requires a gap analysis to support the need for change. The work of Nadler and Tushman (1980) is appropriate here as their Congruence Model is concerned about behavioral systems of the organization (p. 39). In the Congruence Model the first area is called inputs, or the factors the organization has to concern itself with. Three subsets are contained within

the inputs, including environment, resources and history. The environment considers anything outside of the organization that either makes demands, puts constraints on, or offers opportunities.

Figure 1. The Change Path Model (Cawsey et al., 2016, p. 60)



Note. Adapted from "The Change Path Model," by Cawsey et al., 2016, Sage Publishing.

One environmental factor that affects the school division is the Truth and Reconciliation Report. The conclusions contained within, are comprehensive, addressing historical, political, ideological, cultural, economic, legal and spiritual matters (Lamalle, 2015, p. 3). These conclusions culminated in 94 policy recommendations or "Calls to Action" (Truth and Reconciliation Report, p. 319ff, cited in Lamalle, 2015), with calls 62 and 63 (see Table 3) dealing directly with curriculum, teacher education on Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods, and building student capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy and mutual respect.

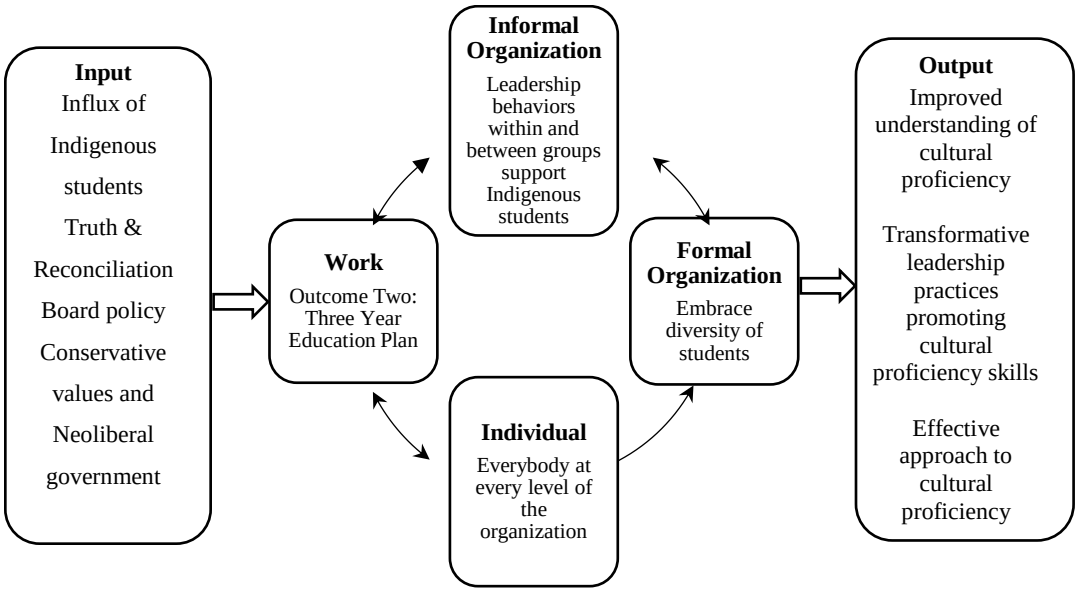
A second environmental factor that influences PSD is the continuing influx of Indigenous students from neighboring reservations into the public education system. Indigenous students come

to PSD with their own unique epistemologies and ontologies, thus experiencing a disconnect between how they learn and transmit their culture, and how they are taught. Furthermore, their parents have been impacted by cognitive imperialism (Battiste, 1998) which causes them to consider their own language and culture inferior to that of the dominant culture (p. 20), eliciting distrust and suspicion of the system, causing them to have little or no voice in the education of their children.

Finally, the neoliberal practices, grounded in institutional controls, privatization and accountability measures (Ryan & Tutors, 2014, p. 4), continue to affect modern day education. Three Year Education Plans and Annual Education Results Reports are imposed on school boards with an expectation of accountability to both the government and the public on sixteen separate measures in education. This document is significant in that it is a locally developed report that both enables hegemonic practices to occur and provides for some opportunity to effect meaningful change for the off-reserve Indigenous student. *Outcome Two: The achievement gap between First Nations, Metis and Inuit students and all other students is eliminated*, (Three Year Education Report/AERR Report, 2016) directly addresses nine measures from the plan.

Figure 2. Current, Transformational and Future States of Cultural Proficiency at PSD

Transformation Process



Note: Nadler, D., & Tushman, M. (1980). A model for diagnosing organizational behavior. *Organizational Dynamics, 9*(2), p. 47.

I, as The Deputy Superintendent, play an integral role in both the development and maintenance of this document; consequently, I have a thorough working knowledge of, and influence over, the outcomes and strategies contained within. A mission statement that espouses everybody learning together for success, is a point of pride for the division, however, it tends to perpetuate a belief system that treats all students the same, thereby impeding the progress of the off-reserve Indigenous student, who the *Three Year Education/AERR 2016 Report* shows needs extra support in order to achieve success (p. 8).

A second subset of Inputs is resources, which is both an area of constraint and one of opportunity for PSD. Board Policy is open to change to accommodate Indigenous student needs and funding for Indigenous student programming is adequate. That the Deputy Superintendent is an advocate for this group also provides greater opportunity to address the POP. School leaders, as well as a majority of teachers, are eager and interested in improving their understanding of Indigenous culture to enable them to better understand the needs of this student population. One significant constraint is the lack of Indigenous staff within the division to advocate for Indigenous

students. A small but dedicated group shares Indigenous expertise with the organization, but authentic Indigenous resources are thinly stretched.

A final subset of Inputs is History. Patterns of past behavior, grounded in Western European ideologies have significantly influenced current day hegemonic practices that remain the status quo (Goddard & Foster, 2002, p.2). This is a detriment to the off-reserve Indigenous student, forced to abide by the stringent regulations of an antiquated and punitive system. Furthermore, school cultures perpetuate these antiquated practices, grounding attendance practices, behavior plans, curriculums, and testing schemes in Western European ideologies that do not consider other ways of knowing or being as legitimate sources for consideration (Our Words, Our Ways, 2005). Radical change within the Awakening Stage would be manifested in disclosing the gaps affected by the environment and creating a clear and powerful vision for change.

The Mobilization stage of the Change Path Model seeks to make sense of change through formal processes, assess cultural dynamics and power, communicate the need for change and leverage personnel to promote the change vision (p. 145). This is reflected in the Strategy section of Inputs in the Congruence Model. New board policies must be created and old policies revised to leverage the capacity of the school board in accommodating this student group, who are the fastest growing population in Canada. (Statistics Canada, 2011). To deny them the opportunity to contribute to society beyond that of their designated reserves is to hobble Canadian society as a whole in capitalizing on the skills and talents this group has to offer the larger society. Moreover, coalitions of people at every level of the organization must work together to champion for the changes that will see Indigenous students attaining high academic achievement and positive and social emotion satisfaction. School culture and the power dynamics of sub cultures (Schein, 1996), will be examined and altered by culturally proficient leaders to promote growth mindsets of teachers to move the change forward. Finally, I, as the deputy superintendent will leverage my

expertise as a strategic activist (Ryan, 2016), establishing strong relationships with colleagues, keeping a low profile, projecting credibility and managing my emotions to move the organization toward change.

The Acceleration Stage of the Change Path Model (p. 299) concerns itself with systematically engaging and empowering others in all aspects of the required change, building momentum, and accelerating and consolidating progress through the use of appropriate tools, and managing and celebrating wins along the way. Within the Congruence Model, this is considered part of the transformation process that considers the elements of Task, Individual, Formal Organization and Informal Organization (p. 47). The task, or the essential work of the organization (p. 44), will align with the strategy of changing hegemonic practices that impede off-reserve Indigenous student achievement. This will be embedded within the division's Three Year Education Plan to address *Outcome Two: The achievement gap between First Nation, Metis and Inuit students and all others is eliminated.* The individual within PSD will receive training in cultural proficiency on how to embrace student diversity within the school rather than to spite it (Terrell & Lindsey, 2009). Numbers 62 and 63 (see Table 3) from the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action will enable leaders and teachers to receive training in Indigenous history within Canada and gain skills in teaching Indigenous knowledge and methodology within classrooms. These opportunities will become part of the fabric of PSD through a formal organizational arrangement- the third component of the transformation process. School principals will become a cohort of transformative leaders, guided by social justice training, cultural proficiency and the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Teachers will embrace best practices for teaching Indigenous students that respect their ways of knowing and being. Schools will become places of celebration of Indigenous cultures, exhibiting both historical and traditional artifacts of the culture, along with current day accomplishments of role models for students to emulate.

The final component of the transformation process is the informal organization. This consists of leadership behaviors (not always from the formal leader) that arise, as well as relationships created within and between groups. In addition, attention must be paid to informal organization design, caused by numerous communication and influence patterns (p. 45). Comprehensive communication strategies, targeted toward all levels of the organization, as well as the larger community, will be required (see Appendix A). Recognition of past injustices for this group is essential to acknowledge the past and move forward with reconciliation. Orange Shirt Day, National Indigenous Peoples' Day, Eagle Feather Graduation Ceremonies, Hand Games competitions, and local Sweat Lodges are only a few of the areas marked as small wins in transforming PSD into an inclusive place where all students can succeed. How these four components of task, individual, formal organization and informal organization, interact with one another is what PSD needs to both understand and influence if change is to occur.

Finally, the Institutionalization Stage of the Change Path Model (p. 345) considers periodic tracking of changes to gauge progress and make changes where required. Moreover, to ensure stability is achieved within the newly transformed organization, new structures, systems and knowledge are created and deployed. Within Nadler and Tushman's Congruence Model, this would be considered the Outputs. Simply put, outputs would be what is produced because of the transformation process. However, congruence should be measured by more than the output. It should include how well the organization is performing at all levels; how well it is using its resources to maintain congruence; and how well it has positioned itself and can adapt to environmental changes (p. 43). Cultural proficiency and transformative leadership practices would continue to form the basis of professional development within the division to ensure alignment with the new transformed organization is maintained. Finally, the examination and creation of policies

and procedures would continue at senior levels of PSD to again ensure the transformation continues in place.

Following a critical organizational analysis using relevant theories of organizational change, the next step is to consider possible solutions to address the POP.

Possible Solutions to Address the Problem of Practice

In this next section, four possible solutions are considered to address the POP. They are growth mindsets, positive behavioral supports, Truth and Reconciliation, and cultural proficiency.

Possible Solution 1: Growth mindsets

Changing student's mindsets deserves consideration as a possible solution toward the underachievement of the off-reserve Indigenous student in a small, rural, public school system. Yeager and Dweck (2012) reveal research that supports the use of growth mindsets to help students attain higher achievement, and reduce levels of stress and aggression, by teaching them about brain growth and the development of social attributes, that ultimately result in enhanced school performance. Implicit theories of intelligence and personality, focus on both fixed, or entity theory, and growth or incremental theory. Implicit theory relates to the plasticity of personal qualities and contains both entity and incremental theories (p. 303). When applied specifically to intelligence and personality, entity theory posits a disposition towards the belief that they are fixed and do not change, while incremental theory holds that these traits have the potential to change.

In reviewing studies on the impact of incremental and entity theory, Yeager and Dweck, discovered that students grounded in these two implicit theories viewed the world differently. Students with an incremental mindset became more resilient in wanting to improve their academic achievement and ultimately were successful in doing so, while students with an entity mindset did not.

Another important aspect of their review of studies on mindsets is that these studies reveal that when incremental theories of intelligence were taught to students, they were able to develop greater resiliency toward schoolwork that resulted in higher academic achievement than groups that did not receive instruction. More specifically, a study using predominately-racial minority seventh grade students proved this theory was valid after they were taught incremental theory. After eight sessions, they outperformed a control group who were only taught study skills. This provides evidence that teaching growth mindsets to off-reserve Indigenous students could be key to assisting in higher levels of achievement and higher levels of social and emotional satisfaction.

Furthermore, Yeager and Dweck examined studies involving incremental theory of personality and observed similar results to that of intelligence where students were simply taught that people have the potential to change. This affected their response to aggressive behavior in other students by reducing their desire to retaliate and caused them to increase prosocial action towards peers that excluded them.

This solution appears to be of great value to the work of district leadership in that it presents one strategy schools could use to teach off-reserve Indigenous students to advance their own advocacy for high levels of academic achievement. The evidence provides a compelling argument for enacting such a strategy within PSD. The determining factor in whether to advance this work is twofold. First is to determine if it aligns with the worldview of the off-reserve Indigenous student. Second, is the total cost of ownership for this training that would require teacher time, substitute costs, facilitator costs and travel and subsistence for participants.

Possible Solution 2: Positive behavioral supports

Positive behavioral supports pose a possible, partial solution to the lack of achievement of the off-reserve Indigenous student within PSD, which continues hegemonic practices grounded in a dominant Western culture.

There is clearly a dissonance between the Indigenous and the dominant Western culture (Neeganagwedgin, 2011, p. 2), which accounts for the discrepancy in educational outcomes between this group and the dominant group. This is evidenced in both discipline protocols that devalue culturally based behaviors, and in teachers' expectations that are typically lower for Indigenous students (McIntosh et al, 2015, p. 238).

Positive Behavioral Supports advances a perspective that Indigenous cultures allow for students to learn appropriate behaviors from elders and others, through modeling and explanations of appropriate behavior. This is viewed as equally important as academic achievement and is in stark contrast to the Western concept of achievement that puts academics at the forefront, and subsumes behavior to an expectation not explicitly taught. As a result, this concept of positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS) is promoted as something that could support the academic success of the off-reserve Indigenous student who currently is not enjoying the same level of achievement as his or her more advantaged peers.

McIntosh et al., see PBIS as a preventative model that uses proactive, evidenced-based practices to establish expected behaviors within a school environment. Its principles are grounded in the instruction of prosocial behavior based on shared social values; a focus on reinforcing appropriate behavior, ensuring the school environment supports the students, and more deeply exploring underlying causes of problem behavior to inform how to establish behaviors that are more appropriate (p. 242-243).

It is worth noting that the PBIS model is not a panacea for all school boards, and that it is critical to be conscious of the heterogeneous make up of Indigenous cultures that may appear to all share the same values, but don't. Recognizing that Indigenous cultures are ever evolving, and the task of validating both the traditional and contemporary culture is a critical element when considering a PBIS model. This model incorporates many of the values of Indigenous cultures

represented within this rural school division. The importance of considering such a model is in honoring the shared values of the minority culture, involving the community in the process, and ensuring that teachers are trained in the model in ways that enable them to be culturally responsive to the needs of this group of students. Training costs would also be a deciding factor in whether this model is promoted for use.

Possible Solution 3: Truth & Reconciliation

The findings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada reveal another possible solution to the POP. Lamalle (2015) provides a clear introduction of the *why* of the Commission, noting that its mandate was four-fold. First, to publicly expose the history and legacy of the church-run residential school systems; second, to record the perpetuation of the individual and collective harms committed against Aboriginal peoples; third, to honor the students, their families and communities for their resiliency throughout the hardships caused by residential schools; and forth, to work toward reconciliation through a process of truth and healing. Lamalle explains the *how*, or the process used for gathering the data and compiling the reports, which unfolded through community visits, national as well as separate events, educational activities, local hearings and 'town halls,' (Truth and Reconciliation Report, p. 23, 2015, cited in Lamalle, 2015). Again, this short overview helps establish an understanding of the enormity of the work of the Commission, both in data collection and in time. Lamalle also reveals the *why* of the Commission, which was to foster a new foundation for Canada based on the two principles of justice and reconciliation, which also became the objectives of the process of inclusion, mutual understanding and respect (Lamalle, p. 3, 2015). Again, a concise overview of the expected outcome of the efforts of the Commission that will provide direction for the Problem of Practice and the Organizational Improvement Plan.

Lamalle reports that the conclusions of the Truth and Reconciliation Report are comprehensive, addressing historical, political, ideological, cultural, economic, legal and spiritual

matters (p. 3). These conclusions culminated in 94 policy recommendations or "Calls to Action" (Truth and Reconciliation Report, p. 319ff, cited in Lamalle, 2015), with Recommendations 6-12 (p. 5) directly related to the creation and funding of new Aboriginal education legislation, protecting languages and cultures and closing the education gap for Aboriginal people.

The conclusions of the Commission on Truth and Reconciliation as described by Lamalle, provide a solid foundation upon which to ground much of the necessary work that lies ahead in changing the practices of the dominant culture within a small, rural, northern school division that currently does not see the need to change its practices. The *why*, *how* and *what* of the work of the Commission will be explored as a means for supporting the work that needs to occur in this school division. Resource needs for this solution would be vast and include extensive training in Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action 62 and 63; elders and knowledge keepers to provide local context for assisting schools in understanding Indigenous epistemologies to better support student needs; and print resources to support this work at all levels of the organization.

Possible Solution 4: Culturally proficient leadership

Culturally proficient leadership presents a possible framework for social justice change that will affect improved academic achievement and positive social and emotional satisfaction for the off-reserve Indigenous student. Nuri-Robins, Terrell and Lindsey (2007, p. 19) remind us that students can be successful in school because of, rather than in spite of, their cultural makeup. The status of the off-reserve Indigenous student would see great improvement within PSD where anecdotal evidence from parents and students says otherwise. Furthermore, a culturally proficient school leader's values and behaviors must favor the diversity of all students if equitable outcomes are to be achieved, meaning a school's policies and practices must also reflect this for student success.

In the personal development of a culturally proficient leader, and his or her school, there must be a natural curiosity about what facilitates and what hinders both access to and academic achievement of students of different cultures. Posing *why* questions that lead to reflection and dialogue will lead to personal and organizational change (Fullan, as cited in Terrell & Lindsey in Griffith & Portelli, 2015). Culturally proficient leaders hold strong beliefs that all students deserve the best education possible and that they and their staff are capable and compelled to provide that for them (p. 124). This is of further interest to this Deputy Superintendent, as I witness meritocracy and color-blindness within the PRSD schools, and desire to work with school leaders to change these hegemonic practices in their schools.

Included in the tools of cultural proficiency is the representation of diverse voices in decision- making processes, relevant and rigorous curriculums, long range and appropriate assessments focusing on narrowing the achievement gap, and policies and practices, that are monitored and analyzed for equity for all.

Terrell & Lindsey further promote the alignment of Sinek's (2009) "golden circle model" of *why, what and how,* with the tools of cultural proficiency that ultimately emerge in Cycles of Interrelatedness (p 123). Three phases include intention, assessment and action. Within the first phase, Sinek's *why* questions prevail resulting in greater awareness of barriers to educational opportunities. This affords the opportunity to explore the guiding principles of cultural proficiency, which leads to greater focus and intention toward cultural proficiency. Next is the assessment phase in which the continuum allows for the reflection of the intention phase to provide a context for Sinek's *what* questions. Effective language for identifying and removing barriers of ineffective policies and practices results from this phase. The third phase is one of action, utilizing Sinek's *how* questions, to sets standards for developing inclusive values and behaviors to guide policies and practices.

In addressing issues of power and equity, Lumby (2012) suggests it might be productive to develop staff cultural competency to challenge the status quo both within and without the school. This resonates with me as cultural proficiency contains a number of elements that could address issues of power and inequity that impede high levels of academic achievement for the off-reserve Indigenous student. A culturally proficient school leader would have a greater awareness of their own belief system and would champion for equity for Indigenous cultures within the school. PSD would embed cultural proficiency training in leadership programs. Doing so would provide professional development that would aid school leaders in learning more about the important role culture plays in education (Howard, cited in Spikes & Goodwin in Griffiths & Portelli 2016, p. 62), thus becoming better equipped to support the unique needs of Indigenous populations in ways that will promote academic achievement. (Lindsey, Robins, & Terrell, cited in Spikes & Goodwin in Griffiths & Portelli, 2015, p. 62). According to Smith (2005), culturally proficient leaders will build school cultures that positively affect the academic achievement of students of color. Staff efficacy will become a greater focus for principals, as will parental involvement in decisions concerning their children (p. 29). Finally, culturally competent school administrators will vigorously meet the needs of culturally diverse learning-disabled students in ways that consider how culture is understood as part of the learning-disabled student's profile (Bakken & Smith, 2011, p. 44). School personnel will become more proficient at distinguishing between the learning disability and cultural interference in determining interventions for learning. Once educators fully understand the impact that language and culture play in a child's development they are better able to focus on the student's learning disability by changing the learning environment rather than the student.

Utilizing the three stages of Sinek's Golden Circle, including intention, assessment and action, would provide direction for leading staff toward an understanding of, and advocacy for, the

importance of all students being successful in school. Again, training would comprise the greatest amount of resources if this solution were to be utilized to address the POP.

Chosen Solution

Developing systemic cultural proficiency appears to be the most comprehensive of solutions to address the POP. It contains a number of elements to address the poor success rate of the off-reserve Indigenous student in attaining high levels of academic achievement. According to Lindsey, Nuri-Robins and Terrell (2003), five essential elements comprise the work of cultural proficiency. They include, assessing the culture, valuing diversity, managing the dynamics of difference, adapting to diversity and institutionalizing cultural knowledge (p. 25). In understanding that institutionalized change is only possible when all members of an organization collaborate fully and faithfully in the change process, there are implications for planning, instruction, curriculum development and assessment. A complete Communication Plan for how this will take place within PSD is outlined in Chapter 3. Culture assessment would occur at multiple levels of the organization and be led by implementation teams (Higgins, Weiner & Young, 2012), consisting of the divisional FNMI Professional Learning Community (PLC), the Aboriginal Interagency Committee (AIC), the Administrators' Association Professional Development Planning Committee, and the FNMI Steering Committee; all of whom, despite their titles, are involved in actionable work of the division. A cultural checklist (adapted from Bustamante & Nelson, 2006) will be utilized at all levels of the division to assess the degree of culture competency, and articulate expectations for all schools. More on this tool is provided later on in chapter 3. At the school level, administrators will assess the school site and provide support for school staff to acquire greater skills in cultural proficiency. At the classroom level teachers will use certain parts of the cultural competency checklist to assess student understanding about their own cultural identities. For the second element, valuing diversity, the division will continue to champion for diversity and in doing so,

offer cultural proficiency training to ensure success for all Indigenous students is fulfilled. Following this, schools will customize a vision for their site and will work with the various implementation teams to enact new provincial education standards for FNMI culture. Teachers will be trained to teach all subjects from a culturally inclusive perspective and will acquire skills to carry high expectations for behaviors and language that value differences. The third element of cultural proficiency, managing the dynamics of difference, will require great collaboration within implementation teams as the difference between behavioral problems and cultural differences will require help from experts to learn how to distinguish between the two. Central office and school administrators will incorporate this element into the professional development plan created for the year. Inclusive coaches, both system and school level, will also take part in this training as they are the front-line people who will work with students and staff in schools. Following this, school administrators will then support teachers to receive training on these two distinct types of conflict. Teachers will gain deeper understanding of conflict management and will teach students a variety of skills to manage conflict. The fourth element, adapting to diversity, will see The Board revising policies that may unintentionally discriminate against certain groups of students within the division. I as the change agent for the division will share these changes through administrator's professional development sessions. School administrators will in turn change hegemonic practices at the site level, while teachers will learn how to do the same at the classroom level. They will also work with students to ensure they understand why things are done in a particular way. Finally, cultural knowledge will be institutionalized within the division through modeling and monitoring of cultural proficiency.

Leading change toward a culturally proficient school system not only requires a plan for moving the division forward, but also necessitates an appropriate leadership approach to enact the change. Strategic activism is one such approach to consider for this OIP.

Leadership Approaches to Change

In seeking a radical change within a small, rural school division, it is critical that I strategically position myself within the organization to best enact change in a way that has been working and motivating others to co-lead this important work. A review of leadership approaches to change reveals one that resonates with me, as it leverages a lower leadership profile to effect the organizational change. The fact that PSD is a predominantly conservative school division requires adept change processes that honor the past work of its professionals, yet expects them to gain new skills to address the changing demographics of a school division that now sees a full quarter of its students represented by Indigenous students whose needs must be met. That would be found in the principles of strategic activism.

Strategic Activism

Strategic activism for educational leaders involves careful consideration of organizational politics, an awareness of their power and position within the organization, and the judicious selection of strategies to attain their goal (Ryan, 2010).

Politically perceptive leaders strategically position themselves in ways that enable them to take actions not always favored by the majority (Ryan, 2016, p. 92). Maintaining a low profile allows the leader to enact important changes without drawing undue attention to the cause. As the Deputy Superintendent of this small rural school division, I have experienced first-hand, deficit ideologies such as meritocracy and color-blindness, that proliferate in schools and, to some degree, within the school board itself. In addition, although I have agency to issue directives for change, it is likely that in doing so, resistance from the dominant group could jeopardize any change agenda. Being strategic ultimately optimizes effectiveness. In addition, gaining the trust of those involved in the process is critical if meaningful change is to occur. Trust, garnered through such facets as benevolence, honesty, openness, competence and consistency (Tschannen-Moran & Careis, 2015,

p.70) provides a foundation where productive and positive working relationships can occur among all levels of the school system. Having credibility is another strategic move that allows leaders to effect change. Demonstrating a faithfulness to the system, being compliant with administrative duties, and establishing competency through knowledge will serve to establish me as a legitimate and trustworthy member of the system. This again will enable me to move the dominant group forward through a proven record of accomplishment of successful reform. Finally, building strong relationships with colleagues is also an essential element that positions leaders where they can take suitable action to promote social justice. Fullan (2001, p.68), contends that desirable results are best achieved when leaders develop strong relationships.

In taking action, a successful leader first aligns herself to the powers within the organization to demonstrate fidelity to the values of the organization that allows her to work with, rather than against, the system. Second, indirectly sowing the seeds of an idea or practice removes the stigma of confrontation, thus facilitating greater and quicker acceptance of that idea or practice. Taking a stand for social justice is the final component of activism. Simply put, despite efforts to be subtle about effecting change, there are times when it is necessary to address power imbalances by taking a stand against the organization (Ryan, 2016).

Strategic activism could be the best chance to promote an agenda for change that sees the off-reserve Indigenous student attaining higher academic achievement and positive social and emotional success. As the change agent for PSD, I am all too aware of the enormity of the task ahead of me. However, in leading and supporting current implementation teams by strategically positioning myself among my colleagues, forging strong relationships with school administrators, and establishing credibility within the division; it is a preferred approach for change making that will see success for the off reserve Indigenous student, because of the work of many at all levels of the organization.

Communicating the Need for Change

With a continuing focus on Indigenous student achievement, the school division collects data on a number of educational outcomes. This data is scrutinized by central office, school principals and staff for trends and patterns, and is used for school Three Year Educational Plans. Additional data, supplied through the division's Student Information System (SIS) provides enrolment numbers that are used to monitor student achievement.

Considering Bolman and Deal's reframing theory (2013), including the structural, human resources, political and symbolic frames, are a part of this OIP; communication to all stakeholders must be a priority as changes occur within the division.

Within the structural frame, changes can occur with respect to policies, administrative procedures, business practices, and program choices. Changes have already occurred with the creation of a new Administrative Procedure Acknowledging Traditional Territory. After receiving Board approval, it was posted on the divisional website and tweeted out in the board highlights, and immediately used during special occasions and events. These practices will continue as the division undergoes more changes to address the Indigenous student experience within its boundaries.

The human resources frame, with a focus on people, and relationships will continue to receive attention. The Board, principals, teachers and other divisional staff will become more aware of, and involved in, the changes taking place, and will become better equipped to foster positive relationships with students, parents and Indigenous agencies through a greater understanding of Indigenous peoples and their culture. Currently, Indigenous parent volunteers are showcasing Indigenous dancing, music and food during special occasions. These activities are communicated out to the larger community through school newsletters, websites, social media, local community newspapers and board reports.

The political frame concerns itself with positional power, networking and building coalitions, bargaining, and negotiating. This domain is critical for communicating change as Indigenous parents continue to be wary of the public-school system and are reluctant to participate in schools. Administrators will learn more about the power of position and use it strategically to engage Indigenous parents more fully in their children's education. More Indigenous parent volunteers are providing information sessions during parent-teacher interviews to better inform other Indigenous parents about school programing, in an attempt to bridge the gap created by The Residential Schools experience. The divisional Indigenous Steering Committee composed of Elders, Indigenous parents, school staff and board members, sets direction for Indigenous programming and then communicates it through the Three Year Education Plan. The work of this committee is evidenced each year in activities such as Hand Games competitions, sweat lodges, Aboriginal Career Days, and Aboriginal Day activities.

Finally, the symbolic frame, including such matters as symbols, meaning, belief, faith, culture, ceremonies and shared values, must be seriously considered throughout this change process. Indigenous Peoples' ways of knowing and being are dramatically different from that of the Eurocentric school system their children attend, and it is incumbent upon the school system to better understand this phenomena and work toward building better relationships that respect and honor their epistemologies and ontologies. Designated school workers, various community partners and elders are assisting schools learn appropriate ways of inviting elders into their schools, the significance of the teepee, the value of a sweat lodge and the cultural significance of food and dance at Round or Tea Dances. This transmission of the culture through hands-on learning is an important aspect of communicating change in the Indigenous worldview.

The Change Path Model (Cawsey et al., 2016) provides a means through which to plan for and communicate change. The four stages of awakening, mobilization, acceleration and institutionalization provide clear direction for how to effect change within the division.

Chapter Three will concern itself with implementation of the OIP, as well as a discussion on evaluating and communicating progress towards the goal of educational success for off-reserve Indigenous students through achieving high academic success and positive social and emotional satisfaction.

Chapter 3: Implementation, Evaluation and Communication

This Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP) requires that hegemonic practices of the dominant Eurocentric culture within Prairie School Division (PSD) radically change to meet the needs of the off-reserve Indigenous student. This chapter will outline an implementation plan, with an emphasis on year one of the plan. Next the chapter will describe how evaluation of the plan will occur. Finally, the chapter will explain how communication will be disseminated on the plan.

Change Implementation Plan

A critical organizational analysis of Prairie School Division reveals that The Change Path Model (Cawsey, Desca, & Ingols, 2016), employing the four phases of Awakening, Mobilization, Acceleration and Institutionalization, is the preferred process to guide radical change. This comes from the understanding that change is not linear and does not require a top down approach (Wheatley, 1993, 1994; Stacey, 1996, Shaw, 1997). Aligned with the Change Path Model, is Moen and Norman's (2009) Plan, Do, Study, Act, Model (PDSA) that provides a robust connection between the four stages of the plan. These will be charted throughout the chapter as well.

Plan Do Study Act Model

The first part of this model entails the planning, which includes identifying and addressing the problem of practice. Chapter 1 contains full information on the POP, which is hegemonic

teacher practices perpetuating low achievement and emotional and social satisfaction of the off-reserve Indigenous student.

The Plan, Do, Study, Act, Model (Moen & Norman, 2006) appears an ideal methodology that is applicable to a variety of organizations, and groups within. This is appropriate to this OIP. It's grounding in theory of knowledge, combined with an iterative learning process including both deductive and inductive learning, provides flexibility throughout the four phases. Learnings can be adapted within the project plans. In addition, its simple nature empowers people to work towards pragmatic results, oftentimes as part of a teamwork approach (p. 10). This model, incorporated within the Cawsey et al. Change Path Model (2016), provides for a clear conception of the *how* and the *why* of the change process. The change Path Model is utilized again during the communication component of this chapter. Following is an outline of the four phases of the PDSA model incorporated into the four stages of the Change Path Model (Cawsey et al., 2016).

The Plan Phase. The Plan phase results from an investigation into hegemonic teacher practices such as meritocracy (Spikes & Gooden, 2015) and color-blindness (Banks, 2001; Milner, 2012) that marginalize the off reserve Indigenous student from attaining high levels of achievement and social and emotional satisfaction. Provincial Achievement Test Results (Alberta Education, October 2015) and Our School Survey data (The Learning Bar, May 2016) confirm this phenomenon. Chapter 1 contains specific statistics. Because there appears a correlation between low levels of achievement and social/emotional satisfaction and hegemonic teacher practices, cultural proficiency is the vehicle through which change will occur, with an end goal that would see students valued because of their diversity. In posing two questions concerning change leadership literature, Higgs and Rowland (2005) address complex and long-term change with a view that emergent change and a master leadership approach are best for long-term, complex change. This resonates with me as the change agent effecting radical, long-term change within a small, rural

school division. Emergent change recognizes the complexity of the change process, requires less centralization, fewer rules, and concentrates on a new emerging environment (p. 147). This supports using cultural proficiency as an overarching tool through which to effect change. It is focused and allows all within the organization to be involved in the change process. Aligned with emergent change is a master leadership approach. This approach acknowledges complexity and recognizes that higher levels of involvement are required to effect change (p. 133). That combined with leadership behaviors that espouse capacity building appear to be an effective strategy for change (p. 143).

As radical change is not linear in nature (Stacey, 1996), cultural proficiency will be offered at various times and places to a variety of groups throughout the 2018 - 2019 school year. As part of the plan, school administrators will learn the tenets of cultural proficiency, grounded in moral purpose (Fullan, 2003) and embodied through beliefs, values, policies and practices (Terrell & Lindsey, 2009). During the Plan stage, including the *who*, the *what*, the *where*, and the *when* of the change vision, will be mapped out. There will be sufficient opportunity for input into the plan during this phase, as it will be utilized at Administrators' Association Meetings and during professional learning community meetings. In addition, it will become an integrated part of FNMI Steering Committee Meetings. Considering the complexity of this type of change, offering all groups the opportunity to provide input and suggest changes throughout the process is vital to ensure that ownership of the plan occurs.

Both local elders and various agencies (Kakakaway) will be invited/contracted to conduct Introduction to Culture workshops with school administrators beginning in the 2018-2019 school year. More training for administrators will involve the newly mandated provincial Leadership Quality Standard (LQS) that is slated for a September 2019 implementation. The provincial Teachers' Association has developed a series of training sessions to inform the LQS, and five

development days will be provided for PSD administrators to learn more about the four standards for success. Further training for school administrators consists of a Blanket Exercise resulting from The Calls for Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report. A local interagency group, led by a member of the PSD, FNMI Steering Committee, will offer this activity. Administrators will continue to take part in and promote the annual Hand Games Competition that takes place the first Friday of every May. These traditional games transmit the Indigenous worldview, and is an opportunity for Indigenous students to see a part of their culture valued by other groups. Administrators will also promote and take part in the annual Eagle Feather graduation ceremony held at the local Pow Wow on the second Sunday of every June. Showing support for this important event fosters better relationships with the Indigenous community, demonstrates valuing the significance of the Eagle feather as a milestone accomplishment, and builds greater trust between students and administrators. Additional opportunities for obtaining cultural training include a local Sisters in Spirit Walk, held each fall to commemorate murdered and missing Indigenous women in Canada. The local Aboriginal Interagency Committee (AIC) organizes this event. Finally, I, as the senior executive member in charge of FNMI programming in the division, will continue to host bi-annual meetings with all administrators to review report card results and comments, which comprise a disproportionate number of Indigenous students appearing at lower levels of achievement on report cards. This practice, implemented in 2013, provides for discourse on Indigenous student progress, impediments to learning, teacher/principal accountability and a collective responsibility for all within the system to see academic improvement in this disadvantaged group.

School staff, including teachers, teacher assistants and office personnel will also receive cultural proficiency training, organized by school administrators and offered by local elders and agencies/companies. Teachers are also undergoing changes to their Teaching Quality Standard

(TQS) that will see them learning about Competency Five: "A teacher develops and applies foundational knowledge about First Nations, Metis and Inuit for the benefit of all students" (Alberta Education, TQS, 2017). Teaching assistant roles and responsibilities are scheduled for review in 2018-2019, which presents the ideal opportunity to infuse cultural proficiency into their job descriptions. This group presents the biggest challenge for PSD as they are unionized and do not come under any specific code of conduct. Any undue stress could see this group covertly working against changing the status quo, which is currently serving them well.

Finally, board members will also receive cultural proficiency training, through both divisional opportunities and their professional school board body. Next is an explanation of how The Plan phase aligns within the Awakening Stage of Cawsey et al.

The Awakening Stage. The Plan phase of the PDSA model closely corresponds to the Awakening stage of Cawsey et al.'s Change Path Model (2016). During this phase, all stakeholders are made aware of the need for change. Thus far, this has occurred through the Three Year Education Plan (2015-2018) which now includes Outcome Two, specifically targeted at eliminating the achievement gap between Indigenous students and all others. The gap analysis, conducted in Chapter 1 indicates that the current state exists because of Eurocentric teacher practices that ignore Indigenous student epistemologies and ontologies; untrained staff, including teachers, teacher assistants and office managers; Indigenous student and parent lack of trust; and silent board policy. A future state of high academic achievement and positive social and emotional satisfaction of the off-reserve Indigenous student is the desired vision. Enabling that is culturally proficient staff who honor and respect Indigenous ways of knowing and being, partnerships with local Indigenous agencies and groups, and finally, board policy addressing the needs of this group of students.

The change vision is currently being communicated on several levels including, national, provincial and local. Within a local context, most staff and board members are aware of the

disparity in achievement levels. This is through an examination of the Accountability Pillar Results that takes place during a one-day planning session at the beginning of the school year for developing a school Three Year Education Plan. A comprehensive communication plan is outlined in Appendix A at the end of this document. This plan will be presented at the May 2018 Administrators' Meeting, the May 2018 FNMI Steering Committee Meeting, the May 2018 Wellness Committee Meeting, which has a focus on Indigenous Wellness for the 2018-2019 school year, and in conjunction with the review of the teacher assistant job description. Board members will also receive the plan prior to any other group to ensure they are supportive of the work ahead and know their role in it. Following the Awakening Stage is The Do phase of PDSA.

The Do Phase. The Do phase sees the plan carried out. Cultural proficiency will predominately involve school administrators provided with teachings on smudging protocols, the Medicine Wheel, Indigenous language patterns, Sweat lodges, Turtle Island, traditional meals & spirit plate, and many more than can be mentioned in this document. The purpose of this training is for school administrators to understand and accept that Indigenous peoples of this area have different epistemologies and ontologies that are a strength for these people and must become a part of the school system to advance their place in the dominant society as partners rather than being marginalized, as is currently the case. This training will occur during a portion of the six Administrator's Association Meetings held in 2018-2019. The LQS will take place during five divisional In-service Days throughout the year, with teacher association representatives leading the way; keeping in mind that in this province, school principals and teachers are all part of the same association. Supervisory staff are always present during administrator training opportunities and will therefore be considered part of the administrator cohort. Other training and in-service during the Do phase will include, an administrator Sweat Lodge experience, offered by a local elder and coordinated through a member of the FNMI Steering Committee. As well, a series of Indigenous

linguistic lessons will be offered through a partnership with a highly regarded and reputable knowledge keeper from a local reserve to assist administrators learn more about Indigenous language and its significance in cultural proficiency. Following an examination of cultural proficiency, the two frameworks will be further explored during the monitoring phase of PDSA.

Cultural proficiency will be the tool through which to effect change through the Change Path Model framework. Detailed information on cultural proficiency follows this piece. Many hands will be involved in instituting cultural proficiency within PSD, not all of whom are currently best suited for the task.

Calls 62 and 63 from the Truth & Reconciliation Commission provide impetus for using cultural proficiency within PSD. Call 62 seeks to create teacher education programs to integrate Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods into classrooms. By extension, PSD will also need to ensure that those currently within the division are also receive this training. Table 4 identifies the various groups within a hierarchy that will need to receive cultural proficiency training to effect the necessary changes within the division.

As well, a change to the Superintendent Quality Standard (SQS), the Leadership Quality Standard (LQS), and the Teaching Quality Standard (TQS), (Provincial Education, 2018), with an implementation date of September 2019, provides additional expectations and opportunities for acquiring foundational knowledge of First Nations, Metis and Inuit culture arising from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action.

The groundwork for cultural proficiency training on Indigenous epistemologies and ontologies is already being laid within PSD. PLC, Steering Committee, Wellness Committee and Interagency Committee implementation teams are already developing workshops and exercises that will provide the foundation for learning about Indigenous culture in the region. In addition, entrepreneurs are emerging in this area and are offering Indigenous cultural teachings within a local

context. This is something that previously did not exist, and I, and the implementation teams will take advantage of what is being offered by local peoples. School administrators will participate in a five day Introduction to Culture course from which they will become certified instructors for transmitting Indigenous teachings on protocols for working with elders, the Medicine Wheel, Turtle Island, the Eagle Feather, sweat lodges and smudging (see Appendix A). This will take place throughout the first year of the implementation plan. Select Indigenous staff will also participate in this training, as they will also act as liaisons for the larger community.

Furthermore, Administrators will participate in sessions during their six Administrators' Association professional development days in 2018-2019. During these sessions, they will learn about Treaties and the contributions of Indigenous peoples in the formation of Canada and will participate in sessions on the Residential Schools experience.

Information for this training will come primarily from the provincial and federal governments who have already created resources to assist in this regard. As well, the

Table 5

Cultural Proficiency Training by Organizational Level for 2018-2019.

Target Audience	First Year Objectives
Board of Trustees	Cultural proficiency training incorporating Indigenous ways of knowing and being, language patterns, significance of medicine wheel, smudging, sweat lodge and other teachings as appropriate.
Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent, Assistant Superintendents	Superintendent Quality Standard (SQS) training on Ensuring First Nations, Metis & Inuit Education for all students. Cultural proficiency training incorporating Indigenous ways of knowing and being, language patterns, significance of medicine wheel, smudging, sweat lodge and other teachings as appropriate.
Secretary Treasurer, Finance, HR, Communications, Technology	Cultural proficiency training incorporating Indigenous ways of knowing and being, language patterns, significance of medicine wheel, smudging, sweat lodge and other teachings as appropriate.
School Principals	Leadership Quality Standard (LQS) on supporting the application of foundational knowledge about First Nations, Metis and Inuit. Cultural proficiency training incorporating Indigenous ways of knowing and being, language patterns, significance of medicine wheel, smudging, sweat lodge and other teachings as appropriate.

Teachers, substitute teachers	Teaching Quality Standard (TQS) training on Applying Foundational Knowledge about First Nations, Metis and Inuit. Cultural proficiency training incorporating Indigenous ways of knowing and being, language patterns, significance of medicine wheel, smudging, sweat lodge and other teachings as appropriate.
Teaching Assistants	Cultural proficiency training incorporating Indigenous ways of knowing and being, language patterns, significance of medicine wheel, smudging, sweat lodge and other teachings as appropriate.
Support Personnel, Maintenance, Transportation, Custodial and Bus Drivers	Cultural proficiency training incorporating Indigenous ways of knowing and being, language patterns, significance of medicine wheel, smudging, sweat lodge and other teachings as appropriate.

Note. Cultural proficiency training includes the seven grandfather teachings of truth, honesty, humility, wisdom, respect, courage and love.

provincial Teachers' Association has created resources and workshops for recognizing cultural differences and for teaching Indigenous students whose worldviews do not align with European thought. These will also form the basis of training in the historical and legal aspects of treaties. In addition to these professional development opportunities, school administrators will be encouraged to work with Indigenous students and families to incorporate the local context into their learnings. Although this list of professional development trainings for the 2018-2019 school year might appear prohibitive, it is in fact, quite doable, and planning is already in place for it to take place. However, it is important to note that learning is not necessarily a one-time affair and that training will continue to take place over a three-year span within the division. The Communication Plan in Appendix A outlines the long-range plan for the division.

Challenges, Limitations, and Constraints

Effecting radical change within a predominantly conservative school division, operating within a neoliberal governmental context, presents challenges, limitations and constraints. The following section briefly outlines what some of these are.

A social justice agenda aimed at acknowledging and addressing inequities experienced by the off-reserve Indigenous student in a small, rural school division is a lofty goal that is fraught with risk. More specifically, using transformative leadership to effect change that calls for critique,

commitment, and the call for moral courage (Shields, 2014) among other things, is no easy feat, and I am very aware of the depth of work and commitment involved in this endeavor. However, to stand by and continue to watch the hegemonic practices of a dominant society affect the success of this marginalized group is no longer an option. I will leverage the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action to address the *why* of this work; transformative leadership through strategic activism as the *how* of this work; and cultural proficiency (Terrell & Lindsey, 2009) as the *what* of this change. Administrators will be trained in Cultural proficiency to better lead their schools in adapting or adopting teaching strategies such as cooperative learning and project based learning that will better accommodate the world views of Indigenous students. They will examine their current attendance policies and make changes to address the home situations of many of these children who are often kept from school to babysit or look after an ailing parent. Finally, school policies will be reviewed and changed to better reflect such things as grading and testing practices that continue to punish Indigenous students who don't necessarily best perform on multiple choice or other pencil and paper tests. There are no guarantees that this OIP will be successful; however, maintaining the status quo is a guarantee of continued failure.

Working within the dominant neoliberal political framework of the current government also poses constraints for this OIP. Government mandates focused on eliminating the achievement gap between FNMI and all other students (Three Year Educational Plan/Annual Education Results Report, 2016-2019), places an emphasis on government assessments that may or may not be a true reflection of Indigenous achievement. Neeganagwedgin (2011) states, "Indigenous peoples' ways of learning then are in direct contrast to the Western ways of learning, which separate knowledge from the sacred (p. 4)." As a result, government assessments do not generally reflect the Indigenous student worldview, rendering them ineffective in accurately assessing what this group knows and can do. As a result, government assessments, although a large part of monitoring of student

achievement, must be put in their proper context as one small data set for determining Indigenous student success.

Finally, a limitation of this OIP will be to involve the larger community of Indigenous peoples into the context of this plan. Fear and suspicion of educational systems remains within the community (Battiste, 1996) and with a primary focus on school principals and teachers, this group may not receive the attention it deserves. It is hoped that through the students, their parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles, and others, they will begin to shed their cloaks of suspicion and fear and begin to embrace the system as a partnership in affording their children the best possible education for themselves and ultimately for their future as a distinct cultural group.

Change Process Monitoring and Evaluation

A monitoring system is vital to inform both the work conducted and the progress made. This can be accomplished through using The Plan, Do, Study Act (PDSA) methodology (Moen & Norman, 2009) noted earlier in the chapter. The Plan and the Do phases have already been outlined at the beginning of this chapter. Next is a continuation of how the PDSA, in conjunction with the Change Path Model, may be utilized to monitor and evaluate radical change within PSD.

The Mobilization Stage

As the change agent undertaking this OIP, it is important that I leverage my personality, knowledge, skills and abilities for change benefit. Employing a strategic activist approach (Ryan, 2016) to this OIP, positions me to effect change in numerous ways and on numerous levels, without bringing undue attention to the cause. To maximize the effectiveness of macro level change efforts (Higgs & Rowland, 2005) I, as the change agent, must ensure that there is a systematic and systemic perspective of change initiatives, as well as assuring strategic alignment of the change pieces (Kang, 2015). In addition, I, as the change agent of micro level change efforts (Higgs & Rowland, 2005), closely connected to, or leading the action items (p. 30), must also have a thorough understanding

of the people involved in this radical change. Knowing the dynamics of group behavior and of organizational cultures and sub cultures (Schein, 1996) will enable me to manage those who will ultimately bring about the change of a school system that values the diversity of students in learning. After the Mobilization Stage comes The Study Phase of PDSA.

The Study Phase

The Study phase requires that work conducted during the previous stages is studied and analyzed to inform the plan. This would be considered the monitoring phase of the plan. During this phase, assessing power and cultural dynamics is critical if true change is to occur. This will occur with a School-wide Cultural Competence Observation Checklist (SCCOC). Using 33 measures (Bustamante & Nelson, 2007) to collect data from multiple sources, this checklist will inform how well the needs, perspectives, and experiences of Indigenous students in PSD schools, and Indigenous peoples within the larger school communities, are reflected in policies, programs, practices, artifacts, rituals and traditions (Bustamante et al, 2009, p. 795). Principals, as the change agents at the school level, will be trained how to use this instrument to monitor and evaluate cultural proficiency within the division. They will use a simple Likert scale checklist as their proof that changes are occurring. Sample sections include literature selections reflecting Indigenous cultural perspectives, the integration of Indigenous world views, knowledge and history into the school and classrooms, linguistic and content objectives are addressed for second language learners, professional development that addresses race, culture, and language opportunities and challenges, differentiated instruction, researched strategies that account for various learning styles, parent involvement programs for Indigenous groups, an examination of organizational traditions to check for exclusive/inclusive practices, and celebrations that introduce Indigenous culture to the larger society. In addition to using the checklist for monitoring change progress, interviews with school administrators will round out this process by eliciting anecdotal information on perceptions of

importance and impact of the 33 checklist items. Doing so will illicit items such as personal bias, underlying assumptions, and inequities in schools that impede the academic achievement of the off-reserve Indigenous student and provide further direction for change.

The establishment of processes for change, combined with the assessments of power and cultural dynamics taking place, provides further data to support radical change in the dominant paradigm of the PSD Eurocentric education system. Results from the SCCOC and the interview questions will be leveraged to provide proof to all levels of the school division, both changes that have occurred to benefit cultural diversity and those that continue to impede change. Again, results will be shared at Administrators' Association Meetings, School Staff Meetings, Board Meetings, FNMI Steering Committee Meetings, AIC Meetings, and at senior administration levels to establish a wide context for the need for change. The Study Phase occurs during the Acceleration Stage of the Change Path Model, and it will be explored next.

The Acceleration Stage. Once cultural proficiency training gets underway in the school division, school administrators, supervisors, and teachers in particular, can begin to provide greater support, planning and implementation toward the change process. Administrators' Association Meetings will be utilized to elicit understandings of the learnings taking place. They will analyze and share data gleaned from the SCCOC on changed practices within their schools. They will also share insights from interviews with me concerning student progress noted on report cards. Teacher level professional learning communities (PLCs) will be better equipped to infuse learnings into curriculum and instruction discussions, as well as formative assessment practices. Supervisors will also gain greater skill in addressing teaching and learning and student supports. This information will also inform the development of new teaching assistant job descriptions that will better meet the needs of Indigenous students.

Celebrations during Administrators' Association Meetings will highlight progress toward a more culturally proficient system. Certificates of achievement will be shared with all schools as we continue to effect changes that see an increase in the number of off-reserve Indigenous students attaining higher levels of achievement and more positive social and emotional experiences within our schools. Once these practices are established, the next phase of the PDSA model, the Act phase, will begin.

The Act Phase. This improvement model (Moen & Norman, 2009, p. 9), with its iterative nature of Plan-Do-Study-Act over the course of this three-year plan, provides an opportunity to learn from The Study phase as a means of determining what is working and what needs to change. This involves next steps and is realized through the Institutionalization stage of the Change Path Model.

The Institutionalization Stage. During the Institutionalization stage (2020) of cultural proficiency training, most people should be deeply involved in the change process. School administrators and supervisory staff will have undergone the greatest amount of training and should be working on effecting change within schools. Teachers will also have received training on their TQS and have a better understanding of what cultural proficiency means within their classrooms and their schools. Teacher assistants and support staff will have experienced a changed role description and will be at the beginning stages of learning cultural proficiency, except for what they learned through interactions and conversations with their professional colleagues. Their work on becoming culturally proficient staff members will be a focus for school administrators as their learning curve will likely be much greater than that of professional staff who are further along in the process. Board members would also have experienced training through their own professional body.

Next steps would include teacher training in new curriculums, slated for implementation in 2020, that address Call to Action 62 from the Truth and Reconciliation Report (2015), and focus on K-12 curriculum on residential schools, Treaties and Aboriginal peoples' historical and contemporary contributions to Canada. With these resources comes a completely new layer of cultural proficiency training that will include deeper learnings on Tribal epistemologies and ontologies and greater knowledge of Indigenous languages beyond the basics already learned. Greater partnerships with local Indigenous agencies and the community will have developed throughout the plan, where both groups will now be poised for more equal partnerships. This stage will require a concerted and committed effort from all system personnel if this new paradigm is to maintain its footing as a just and equitable way for the off-reserve Indigenous student to attain high levels of academic achievement and experience positive social and emotional satisfaction. The changes noted above require a radical change, and radical change must be effectively implemented for the betterment of the students in its care, and for society as a whole. Following is a review of the importance of ethical leadership in effecting radical change for social justice.

Leadership Ethics and Organizational Change

This OIP leverages cultural proficiency (Terrell & Lindsay, 2007) as the mechanism for addressing inequities and injustices inhibiting off-reserve Indigenous students in reaching high levels of academic achievement, and positive social and emotional satisfaction in a public education system. It will be incorporated through the strategic activist (Ryan, 2003, 2010, 2016) approach of this change leader, and will be grounded in major elements of transformative leadership (Shields, 2010, p. 562). Ethical considerations stemming from this OIP include how I, as the change leader for this work, will ensure school principals are best educated to become culturally proficient leaders; leaders who champion and advocate for students "because of their cultural memberships, and not in spite of them" (Terrell & Lindsey, cited in Griffiths & Portelli, 2015, p. 123). Another

consideration is how transformative leadership can be influential in guiding principal practice toward both an educational and broader social change. The ethic of critique will play a central role in helping school leaders identify dominant practices, reflected in pedagogy, attendance practices and assessment, and develop an awareness of power and privilege to enact transformation within the school, and therefore within the system (Starratt, 1991, Shields, 2010, 2014). A final consideration is how I can utilize the skills of strategic activism to promote a social justice agenda without unduly jeopardizing the trust of my colleagues, my legitimacy as a knowledgeable leader, and my loyalty to the system.

Simply stated, transformative leadership concerns itself with recognizing the need to include all students and their families in the school and work against exclusionary practices utilized by the dominant groups that marginalize or other groups of students (Shields, 2014, p. 325). Shields notes that transformative leadership has as its central preoccupation the dual purposes of critique and possibility (2010, p.269). She relates,

> Transformative leadership, therefore, recognizes the need to begin with critical reflection and analysis and to move through enlightened understanding to action- action to redress wrongs and to ensure that all members of the organization are provided with as level a playing field as possible- not only with respect to access but also with regard to academic, social and civic outcomes (p. 572).

A level playing field in this OIP would be that the off-reserve Indigenous student is no longer subjected to hegemonic norms of Eurocentric practices that are epistemologically and ontologically different from their worldviews, thus greatly reducing their chance for academic success and social and emotional satisfaction. In seeking to create such a system, the lived experiences of the Indigenous students within our system must be considered if they are able to succeed, and the school must have agency to offer high quality education for all (Shields, 2014, p. 333).

Strategic activism empowers the change leader to better understand how power works within a system that resists social justice practices (Ryan, 2010). Getting to know the propensities and positions of colleagues within the system better positions me as the change leader to know where I stand in the organization and how I can best effect change for the benefit of the off-reserve Indigenous student. Ryan (2016, p. 94) highlights four key strategies for accomplishing this. First, establish certain kinds of relationships with colleagues, ones that will put you in a favorable light to those you are working with. Second, project a modest persona; one that does not upset the groups you are working with. Third, establish yourself as a credible source for the intended change. Fourth, keep your emotions in check. I am confident in my ability to build strong relationships with school leaders, and to be seen as a credible source with over 35 years of experience working with Indigenous peoples. In addition, because strategic activism is a legitimate model for effecting change, school principals can also learn to leverage it as a model they themselves can use as they move forward with this important work.

Cultural proficiency can be described as "…a way to understand, embrace, and talk about differences that recognizes and respects individuals and their cultures (Nuri-Robins et al., 2007, p. 16), By association, cultural proficiency encompasses the ethic of caring. According to Starratt (1991), "Educational administrators committed to an ethic of caring will be grounded in the belief that the integrity of human relationships should be held sacred and that the school as an organization should hold the good of human beings within it as sacred" (p. 195). The two go hand in hand. In using cultural proficiency to effect change, I as the change leader, working in consort with collaborative partners, school principals and ultimately teachers, will ensure all levels of the system- institutional, personal and instructional (Capacity Building Series 35, 2013) - through intentional and recurring professional development within the Change Path Model (Cawsey et al., 2016), will begin to change the mindsets of the powered and the privileged. Collaboration at all

levels will be required. Sharratt & Planche (2016) define collaboration as "co-laboring to become responsible and accountable for our own work while supporting the work of other collaborators. Co-laboring fosters interdependence as we negotiate meaning and relevance together" (p 4). This will occur by going beyond notions of cultural celebrations as the epitome of culture, to a deeper understanding of epistemologies and ontologies, thereby gaining a greater respect and understanding of the off-reserve Indigenous students' culture. This will involve an effective and long-term communication plan, which will be explored next.

Change Process Communication Plan

Communication efforts during large-scale radical change, attempt to persuade stakeholders to adopt a new vision of the future. However, before they can arrive at this new vision, Beatty (2015) advises that "three things must be absolutely clear to them: the "why," "what" and "how" of the change" (p. 1). For PSD, Accountability Pillar data (Alberta Government, 2016) shared twice yearly with provincial school boards, provides clear evidence that an achievement gap exists between the off-reserve Indigenous student and their non-Indigenous counterparts. Furthermore, Indigenous peoples are the fastest growing population in Canada (Richards, 2014); with high indications, they are moving away from reserves (Statistics Canada, 2011) to take advantage of schooling and employment in the larger society. That said, the *why* of change becomes clearer considering this population is poised and ready to fill the employment gap that currently exists within the Prairie Provinces and are preparing to take their rightful place as partners with Canada through the actions of Truth and Reconciliation (2015). Eliminating the achievement gap between the off-reserve Indigenous student and all others is key to future coexistence as equals with the dominant culture that has been allowed to impose Eurocentric practices within education systems for far too long.

The Change Path Model (Cawsey et al., 2016) is leveraged as an approach to effect radical change towards a vision of cultural proficiency that champions for Indigenous students because of their culture, rather than in spite of it (Terrell & Lindsey, 2009). It addresses the *what*, or content of change, and the *how*, or process of change (p. 39). The four stages of awakening, mobilization, acceleration and institutionalization are utilized to demonstrate communication throughout thestages. Bolman and Deal's Four Frames, including structural, political, human resources and symbols, will also address the "what" of change. Appendix A provides an overview of the change process communication plan, employing the Change Path Model and the four frames of Bolman and Deal.

What to Communicate

A social justice (Bogotch, 2010; Shields, 2014; Ryan, 2016) agenda where school leaders will advocate for Indigenous students and the value of their epistemologies and ontologies must take place if radical change is to occur within PSD.

> Argyris (Argyris & Schon, 1974) argues that changes that are restricted to strategies and do not include the values that drive them are rarely effective. Therefore, we must include an examination of our values in making decisions. We must ask ourselves, 'What values guide our decisions?' and consider how these values differ from the ones espoused. (Jenni Donohoo: personal communication, January 13, 2015 in Sharratt & Planche, 2016, p. 5).

If system leaders and school principals openly advocate for the success of the off reserve Indigenous student, then teachers will also learn to champion for this underrepresented group within and without the classroom. Support staff will better understand and support the needs of this group as well. Central office leadership teams will promote social justice and provide resources to enable the work of the schools. Finally, the Board of Trustees will enact policy to advance the expectation that Indigenous students are valued members of the PSD family and as such should be afforded every opportunity to succeed without subsuming their identity to that of the dominant society. Second is the adoption of cultural proficiency as the framework through which to support a

social justice plan. Culturally proficient leaders hold strong beliefs that all students deserve the best education possible and that they and their staff are capable and compelled to provide that for them (Fullan, as cited in Terrell & Lindsey in Griffith & Portelli, 2015, p. 124). Smith corroborates this (2005) by noting; culturally proficient leaders will build school cultures that positively affect the academic achievement of students of color. With these points in mind, training of all divisional staff in cultural proficiency will become key to the success of the off-reserve Indigenous student, academically, socially, and emotionally. All communication will be directed toward learning more about Indigenous students and their ways of being and knowing as a means of honoring and respecting the social and cultural values that this group brings to the dominant society.

Target Audiences

Morrison (2013) notes, educational systems will have no affect if reacting to change is the norm. They must be at the forefront of change, which includes applying theoretical models to the system to ensure the entire system understands and supports change. Although hundreds of years of oppression towards Indigenous peoples would dictate that we are nowhere near getting in front of the change, current understandings of the damage that was rendered because of the residential schools' effect (Truth & Reconciliation, 2015) implores us to finally act to right the injustices committed toward this group. As a result, all people within PSD must be a part of this OIP. In employing a model to support the change, a communication plan becomes vital to its success. School administrators are the primary focus of this plan. They will lead the change toward cultural proficiency in their schools and will be the first point of contact for all others involved in the change process. Teachers are the secondary focus of the plan. They are the frontline people whose practices, must of necessity, change, if Indigenous students are to succeed in attaining high levels of achievement. Support staff are a tertiary focus for educational opportunities if they are to do their share in supporting and respecting Indigenous students and their families. Central office, including

superintendents, supervisors, managers and executive assistants will clearly need to be part of the plan as they will carry the vision of cultural proficiency on behalf of the school division, as they support and lead schools in their work. Finally, the Board of Trustees will be very much a part of the training offered throughout the course of the plan. Without their support and leadership, the change effort will inevitably fail.

The Change Path Model

The Change Path Model (Cawsey et al., 2016) provides a means through which to plan for and communicate change. The four stages of awakening, mobilization, acceleration and institutionalization provide clear direction for how to effect change within the division. This, combined with Bolman & Deal's reframing theory (2013), including the structural, human resources, political and symbolic frames, comprises the communication plan that addresses all stakeholders at all stages to effect radical change within the division. Appendix A contains the complete communication plan.

With a continuing focus on Indigenous student achievement, the provincial government provides school divisions with data on a number of educational outcomes. This data is scrutinized by this change leader, school principals and staff for trends and patterns, and is used for school planning in Three Year Educational Plans. In addition, these results are shared with The Board of Trustees at Board meetings and school principals at Administrators' Association Meetings. Finally, school principals meet early each fall to review the results and discuss strategies that are working and those that are not, and collectively work toward supporting areas that are showing results and those requiring improvement. Additional data, supplied through the division's Student Information System (SIS) provides enrolment numbers that supervisors, school administrators and I use to monitor student achievement.

Considering Bolman & Deal's reframing theory (2013), including the structural, human resources, political and symbolic frames, are a part of this OIP, communication to all stakeholders must be a priority as changes occur within the division.

Within the structural frame, changes will occur with respect to policies, administrative procedures, business practices, and program choices. In fact, changes have already occurred with the creation of a new Administrative Procedure (AP) Acknowledging Traditional Territory, which is in keeping with provincial direction for addressing the Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The board approved it, administrators reviewed it, it was posted on the divisional website and tweeted out in the board highlights, and almost immediately was used during special occasions and events. These practices will continue to take place as the division undergoes more changes to address the Indigenous student experience within its boundaries.

The human resources frame, with a focus on people, and relationships will continue to receive attention. The Board, principals, teachers and other divisional staff will become more aware of, and involved in, the changes taking place, and will become better equipped to foster positive relationships with students, parents and Indigenous agencies through a greater understanding of Indigenous peoples and their culture. Again, some of this work is already taking place within the division with more Indigenous parent volunteers coming to schools to showcase Indigenous dancing, music and food during special occasions. These activities, highlighting Indigenous parent volunteerism, is communicated out to the larger community through school newsletters, websites, local community newspapers, and through this change leader's board reports.

The political frame concerns itself with positional power, networking and building coalitions, bargaining, and negotiating. This domain is critical for communicating change as Indigenous parents continue to be wary of the public-school system and are reluctant to participate in schools. People at all levels of the division will need to network, build coalitions and learn how

to bargain and negotiate with this group in order to effect change. Administrators in particular will need to become more informed about the power of position, and how to use it strategically to engage Indigenous parents more fully in their children's education. Already, a select number of schools have Indigenous parent volunteers providing information sessions during parent-teacher interviews to better inform other Indigenous parents about school programing, budget, and student supports in an attempt to bridge the gap created by The Residential Schools experience. This change leader chairs an Indigenous Steering Committee composed of Elders, Indigenous parents, support personnel, teachers, administrators, board members and wellness workers where direction for Indigenous programming is determined then communicated to the division through the Three Year Education Plan. Involving a large contingency of Indigenous people in this process builds strong coalitions and networking opportunities within the division. The work of this committee is evidenced each year in planned activities such as Hand Games competitions, sweat lodges, Aboriginal Career Days, Aboriginal Day activities and Orange Shirt Day.

Finally, the symbolic frame, including such matters as symbols, meaning, belief, faith, culture, ceremonies and shared values, must be seriously considered throughout this change process. Indigenous Peoples' ways of knowing and being are dramatically different from that of the Eurocentric school system their children attend, and it is incumbent upon the school system to better understand this phenomena and work toward building better relationships that respect and honor their epistemologies and ontologies. Designated school workers, various community partners and elders are assisting schools learn appropriate ways of inviting elders into their schools, the significance of the teepee, the value of a sweat lodge and the cultural significance of food and dance at Round or Tea Dances. This transmission of the culture through hands-on learning is an important aspect of communicating change in the Indigenous worldview.

The Change Path Model (Cawsey et al., 2016) provides a means through which to plan for and communicate change. The four stages of awakening, mobilization, acceleration and institutionalization provide clear direction for how to effect change within the division. The awakening stage considers the forces for and against change, which already informs this change leader of the conservative and neo-liberal beliefs that currently exist within the division and need to change. The mobilization stage will allow coalitions to be built to support the change. This is already happening in small pockets within the division through the FNMI Steering Committee and divisional PLC, but will need to be greatly expanded upon, as both are currently homogenous groups joined together in a single purpose. The acceleration stage will come next and will see a detailed plan activated in order to implement the changes. Although this will consider the government mandated Three Year Educational Plan, it will go deeper through a consideration of the four frames noted earlier. Finally, institutionalization, involving a new state, will see meaningful changes imbedded in policies and practices, and be supported by central office, the board, school administrators and staff in effecting change that will see an increase in the number of off-reserve Indigenous students attain higher academic achievement and greater levels of social and emotional success. Appendix A contains a thorough communication plan illustrating a communication strategy combining Bolman and Deal's Four Frames and the Change Path Model. This chapter highlights a change implementation plan for this OIP. It also discusses *why* and *how* evaluation of the plan can take place using the SCCOC instrument. Finally, it outlines a comprehensive communication plan that covers the three plus years of this organizational improvement plan. In moving forward with this plan, next steps and future considerations will be explored.

Next Steps and Future Considerations

This OIP offers an organizational response to the problem of hegemonic school practices that obfuscate the off-reserve Indigenous student's ability to achieve high academic success and

positive social and emotional satisfaction within a small, rural, public school system. Specifically, it examines cultural proficiency (Terrell & Lindsay, 2009) as a means of addressing deficit ideologies, grounded in Eurocentric school practices that will embrace this student population, because of their culture rather than in spite of it. Leveraging Calls 62 and 63 from The Truth and Reconciliation Commission will ensure cultural proficiency remains a high priority for the division. The calls require attention, to, among other things, "that staff and students gain a knowledge and understanding of, and respect for, the histories, cultures, languages, contributions, perspectives, experiences and contemporary contexts of First Nation, Metis and Inuit" (Leadership Quality Standard, 2017, p. 6).

Finally, faithful implementation of the SCCOC (Bustamante et al., 2009) as an auditing tool for cultural proficiency will be a high priority for PSD. The Institutionalization Stage of the Change Path Model outlines tacking changes to gauge progress, and develop and deploy new structures and systems to accommodate changes taking place. Therefore, data generated by the survey will continue to inform practice and set priorities for professional development and other training within the division.

The why of the work of this OIP is clear. It is our moral imperative to address the injustices imposed upon Indigenous peoples of Canada, especially within its education systems.
The what is becoming clearer as the findings of the Truth & Reconciliation Commission are revealing the atrocities of the Residential School experiences, the significance of Treaties, and the historical significance of the role Indigenous peoples, through their cultures, played in the settlement of Canada. Through a true understanding of the value of Indigenous epistemologies and ontologies, school systems will be better prepared to work with and for them in providing the best educational opportunities for their success. Finally, the *how* of what we must do to improve the academic, and social and emotional success of the Indigenous student in this small, rural school

system becomes clearer. Cultural proficiency training for all employees at all levels of the organization, enacted through coalitions of people working together for one common purpose, can be the way to effect radical change in PSD. Resources that were not available before are now becoming more readily available to help us with this work. It has been a long journey to get to this point, and it will be a longer journey to rectify the injustices suffered by Indigenous peoples. We know that education played a major role in the development of the current system, and we know that education can rectify the injustices of the past. Our work begins now.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Communication plan using Four Frames Model and Change Path Model

Change Path Model Stages of Communication

Four Frames for Communication

Structural	1. Awakening 2017-2018	2. Mobilization 2018-2019	3. Acceleration 2019-2020	4. Institutionalization Onward
Three Year Education Plan: Outcome Two: The systemic education achievement gap between First Nations, Métis and Inuit students and all other students is eliminated • *Eleven strategies comprise the work of schools, division, Indigenous PLC, divisional Information Materials Centre (IMC)*	Board of Trustees revises divisional plan yearly in consultation with schools, and the public. It is posted on the divisional website for information. School plans are revised by schools in consultation with their school councils, students, parents and the public and are posted on school websites. Strategies are communicated to the public through local media, social media and divisional websites.	Outcome Two includes new strategies for using Cultural Proficiency to understand and address hegemonic school practices. Plan is posted on divisional and school websites. Plans are shared with Board of Trustees and school councils.	Outcome Two continues to be addressed at divisional and school levels. Strategies are continued, changed or deleted depending on improvement indicators. Improvement in Indigenous student achievement is celebrated through website, Facebook and local media.	Outcome Two of the Three Year Education Plan continues to be addressed through cultural proficiency. It is communicated to the Board of Trustees, schools, government, and the public as celebrations of improved Indigenous student achievement and positive social and emotional satisfaction continue. New policies are created because of changed practice. Examples, Locally developed courses created based on Sweat lodge teachings, Cree language course offered based on need.
Principal Quality Standard (PQS) Supporting the Application of Foundational Knowledge about First Nations, Metis and Inuit (5)A principal supports the school community in acquiring and applying foundational knowledge about First Nations, Metis and Inuit for the benefit of all students. Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as: understanding of the historical, social, economic, and political implications: • Treaties and agreements with First Nations • Legislation and agreements negotiated with Metis; and • Residential schools and their legacy; (b) aligning school resources and building the capacity of the school community to support First Nations, Metis and Inuit (c) enabling all school staff and students to gain a knowledge and	The plan, focusing on foundational knowledge of Indigenous peoples, is shared at the June 2018 Administrators' Association Meeting. Policy for hiring Indigenous peoples in schools will be introduced to school administrators for information and feedback on building greater capacity to	Introduction to Cultural Proficiency Plan: Administrators' Association PD Plan includes six sessions introducing them to cultural proficiency. Additional PD opportunities will be offered through staff who become trained in Cultural Proficiency. The School Board will create Policy for hiring Indigenous peoples in schools. Communication will take place through Board highlights, and at all meeting levels within the division.	Continuation of cultural proficiency teaching within PQS. Higher level teachings address matters such as residential schools legacies, treaties, ontologies and epistemologies, and promote respect for Indigenous peoples throughout their communities. Schools will actively seek Indigenous peoples to assist building capacity to support FNMI teachings and students. Human Resources will track number of people hired for positions to determine if communication of this	Continuation of cultural proficiency teaching within PQS. Administrators are better able to champion for students because their training is affording them the knowledge and understanding needed to advocate for these students. Division will highlight and celebrate Indigenous people hired in schools to support FNMI students and learnings.

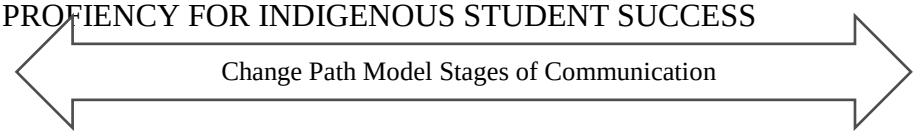
Four Frames for Communication

understanding of, and respect for, the histories, cultures, languages, contributions, perspectives, experiences and contemporary contexts of First Nations, Metis and Inuit; and (d) pursuing opportunities and engaging in practices to facilitate reconciliation within the school community student achievement;	support FNMI teachings.		strategy is affecting hiring practices.	
Teaching Quality Standard (TQS) Applying Foundational Knowledge about First Nations, Metis and Inuit, (5) A teacher develops and applies foundational knowledge about First Nations, Metis and Inuit for the benefit of all students. Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as: understanding the historical, social, (a) economic, and political implications of: • Treaties and agreements with First Nations • Legislation and agreements negotiated with Metis; and • Residential schools and their legacy; (b) supporting student achievement by engaging in collaborative, whole school approaches to capacity building in First Nations, Metis and Inuit education; (c) using the programs of study to provide opportunities for all students to develop a knowledge and understanding of, and respect for, the histories, cultures, languages, contributions, perspectives, experiences and contemporary contexts of First Nations, Metis and Inuit; and (d) supporting the learning experiences of all students by using resources that accurately reflect and demonstrate the strength and diversity of First Nations, Metis and Inuit.	The plan, focusing on foundational knowledge of Indigenous peoples is reviewed at a June 2018 school staff Meeting.	Site based PD Days will incorporate Cultural Proficiency Training. This will comprise 8 days of training.	Continuation of cultural proficiency teaching within TQS. Teachers are better educated to address matters such as residential schools legacies, treaties, ontologies and epistemologies, and promote respect for Indigenous peoples throughout their communities.	Continuation of cultural proficiency teaching within TQS. Teachers are better able to champion for students because their training is affording them the knowledge and understanding needed to advocate for these students.

Change Path Model Stages of Communication

Four Frames for Communication

Political	1. Awakening 2017-2018	2. Mobilization 2018-2019	3. Acceleration 2019-2020	4. Institutionalization Onward
Positional Power Change leader position to build capacity for change. Divisional responsibility for FNMI programming and oversight of school principals, Allows for direct contact with administrators.	Introduction of cultural proficiency training at Administrators' Association Meeting. Capitalize on PQS and TQS as foundations for learning cultural proficiency.	Strategic activism strategies to bring people forward through small scale and low fanfare. Repeatedly communicate the message that cultural proficiency is a means by which to meet their LQS and TQS standards.	Celebrate changes made toward new instructional practices through the PQS and TQS. Continue to support staff training in cultural proficiency. Facilitate administrator training on SCCOC to determine progress toward goal of changed practices that address Indigenous students' worldviews.	SCCOC will be used to inform progress towards school and division wide cultural competency. Survey will be modified over time and as required. School administrators will be proficient in using this tool and it will become part of their toolkit for improving Indigenous achievement and social and emotional satisfaction.
Networking Teachers' Association, Dept. of Education, Learning Consortiums, Council of School Superintendents (CSS), parents. Utilize expertise of Aboriginal Interagency Committee (AIC) to deliver the Blanket Exercise to all stakeholders.	Capitalize on Teachers' Association sessions by sponsoring sessions locally; take advantage of Council of School Superintendents' Aboriginal Gathering in spring of 2018. Introduction to Colonialism through Blanket Exercise. Offered by local AIC.	Department of Education to offer sessions on new curriculum, embedded with Aboriginal peoples role in Canadian history and the history and legacy of residential schools. Build student capacity for empathy, mutual respect and intercultural understanding.	Strong coalitions of all stakeholders to build capacity for best practices on teaching curriculum related to residential schools and Aboriginal history AIC will continue to work with PSD on Cultural Proficiency Training.	Teacher Professional Learning Communities are utilized for building stronger bases for teaching both Indigenous culture, and honoring Indigenous students because of their culture. Cultural Proficiency is entrenched in PSD.
Building coalitions FNMI PLC meets to discuss Indigenous student programming. Utilize the local Friendship Centre to assist in introducing schools to T & R Calls to Action 62 & 63.	Staff participation in Introduction to Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action 62. & 63	Friendship Centre hosts meetings between school employees and local Indigenous residents on Residential Schools effects.	Continuation of community meetings to understand the viewpoint of the local Indigenous peoples on history, language and culture.	New relationships become the norm and local Indigenous peoples engage in school activities in partnership with school, and board personnel.



Human Resources	1. Awakening 2017-2018	2. Mobilization 2018-2019	3. Acceleration 2019-2020	4. Institutionalization Onward
The Board Central Office, School principals Teachers, TAs and Office Managers	Presentation of OIP to Board of Trustees at end of year meeting. Presentation of OIP to administrators at end of year meeting. Introduction to Culture Course offered once this school year to teachers, teacher assistants, and office managers.	Cultural Proficiency Plan is shared with divisional personnel. Includes input from the divisional FNMI PLC, the Aboriginal Interagency Committee (AIC), the Friendship Centre, elders and knowledge workers within the division.	SCCOC data shared with all applicable stakeholders to inform decision-making. The plan will be modified and communicated based on results from the SCCOC survey.	High levels of staff efficacy, and high levels of student and parent satisfaction reported on Accountability Pillar results from the Three Year Education Plan. Celebrations of Indigenous student improvements, both in person and through media, school newsletters and local newspapers.
Relationships	Information from PLC, Steering Committee, Instructional Leaders' (Central Office), FMNI Steering Committee and Administrators' Association Meetings to inform plans for future cultural proficiency training.	Local elders and knowledge keepers, Friendship Society and Aboriginal Interagency Committee will continue partnerships with the school division in moving it toward cultural proficiency. As much as is culturally correct, lists of available people/agencies will be shared with schools.	Continue to expand on number of groups and individuals who can assist with cultural proficiency within the division. List will be modified as needed and shared out to schools. Continue to build coalitions of people to champion for Indigenous students.	Increase profile of those people/groups working with division through social media, newsletters, board recognition. Lobby government for additional funding to support more positions/ honorariums for those assisting with cultural proficiency

Change Path Model Stages of Communication

Four Frames for Communication

Symbolic	1. Awakening 2017-2018	2. Mobilization 2018-2019	3. Acceleration 2019-2020	4. Institutionalization Onward
Symbols Treaty and Metis flags Teepees	FNMI Steering Committee has initial conversation on installing Treaty flags at all schools to acknowledge territory. School Board and schools made aware of the matter. Currently used for special occasions within the division. Little to no understanding of significance of ceremonial teepee.	Matter included on meeting agendas for feedback. Examples are Administrators' group, Central Administration, school staff and School Council Meetings. Communication plan developed to share with all schools on the significance of the ceremonial teepee. Teepees erected on school sites, especially where Treaty Land is in high profile	Board creates policy, which is shared with schools, public, and local media. Creation of a feedback loop to determine levels of acceptance and understanding. Continuation of education toward significance of ceremonial teepee. Feedback loop created to determine level of understanding and respect toward ceremonial teepees.	Treaty and Metis flags are flown at all schools as acknowledgement of ancestral lands. All schools/communities know the significance of the ceremonial teepee, and are empowered to teach others about it. Schools and communities include teepees in their celebrations to honor the ancestral rights of Indigenous peoples.
Celebrations/ Ceremonies Indigenous Hand Games Competition	Offered yearly within the division. Showcases the culture. Highly publicized and attended by politicians, elders, executive staff and over 400 staff and students	Expand games to include neighboring school divisions. Include more elders and knowledge keepers to enhance level of competition.	Continue to honor and expand the games to create greater awareness of Indigenous culture throughout the region.	Hand Games competition continues to be a means of celebration of Indigenous culture throughout the region.
Eagle Feather Ceremony for high school graduates Metis sash presentations	Ceremony showcased during the annual Pow Wow. Politicians, local community and school administrators participate in the ceremony. Local media showcases the event. Awarded to high school graduates during National Indigenous Peoples' celebrations. Local dignitaries, central office staff and the media attend.	Elder sessions on significance of Eagle Feather Ceremony are directed toward FNMI students throughout the year. Higher profile given to this celebration. Local dignitaries, agencies, parents and community invited to attend.	Protocols are developed to provide parents, staff, community, politicians a better understanding of significance of ceremony. Human Resources department communicates number of sash recipients to community and various agencies through print and media.	Continue to seek ways to promote Eagle Feather Ceremony that is respectful of Indigenous teachings. Celebration becomes entrenched practice. Communication includes local media, and fan-out lists to community and school newsletters.
Shared values Epistemologies Ontologies	Schools are currently learning more about Indigenous ways of knowing through Teachers' Association and other isolated workshop opportunities. Superficial understanding of Indigenous ontologies exists.	Cultural Proficiency training provides a better understanding of Indigenous peoples' world view. Cultural Proficiency training illuminates Indigenous ontologies in juxtaposition to dominant ontological forms.	Cultural Proficiency training continues to take place both within and external to the division. Indigenous ways of being will become a greater topic of discussion as we learn about other ways of experiencing the world	Cultural Proficiency training is entrenched in divisional professional development. Celebrations of Indigenous epistemologies are shared throughout the division. Ontologies, both dominant and "other" will be shared throughout the division as more people become educated about the Indigenous worldview.

Appendix B: The School-Wide Cultural Competence Observation Checklist

THE SCHOOL-WIDE CULTURAL COMPETENCE OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

School District:	
School:	
Principal:	
Researcher(s):	
Review Date:	

Instructions: Rate on a scale of 1 to 5 (1= Never 2= Almost Never 3=Sometimes 4= Almost Always 5=Always) the extent to which you observe each of the following criteria for cultural competence. Please note or provide evidence or documentation to support your rating.

	Observation Area/Domain and Criteria	Scale	Evidence/Documentation
School Vision/Mission			
1	There is a school Mission Statement or Vision Statement that includes a stated commitment to diversity and/or global citizenry.	**1 2 3 4 5**	
Curriculum			
2	Literature selections in the curriculum reflect a variety of cultural perspectives (classrooms and library).	**1 2 3 4 5**	
4	Global perspectives are integrated into curricula at all grade levels (world history and geography, culture studies, languages).	**1 2 3 4 5**	
5	Linguistic and content objectives are addressed for second language learners.	**1 2 3 4 5**	

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Student Interaction and Leadership			
6	Racial/ethnic representation in advanced placement classes, honors classes, and gifted programs is balanced.	**1 2 3 4 5**	
7	Youth "voice" is considered in decision-making by regularly meeting with randomly selected groups of students to obtain feedback.	**1 2 3 4 5 NA**	
8	There is a variety of student leadership opportunities for all students.	**1 2 3 4 5**	
9	Students of different groups integrate socially outside of the classroom.	**1 2 3 4 5**	
10	There are identified support programs to promote achievement and retention of lower achieving groups.	**1 2 3 4 5**	
11	Students are involved in community service and service learning activities.	**1 2 3 4 5**	
12	There is a program in place to facilitate the adaptation of NEW students into the school and classroom.	**1 2 3 4 5**	

Teachers			
13	Teachers representing diverse groups are actively recruited by the principal and the district.	**1 2 3 4 5**	
14	New teachers are formally inducted through orientations and structured mentoring and support programs.	**1 2 3 4 5**	
15	Teachers team vertically and horizontally according to individual strengths, leadership abilities, and interests.	**1 2 3 4 5**	
16	Efforts are made to consciously integrate diverse teacher teams.	**1 2 3 4 5**	
17	Professional development is offered that addresses: a) race/ethnicity/nationality b) sexual orientation c) special needs d) language and dialect	 **1 2 3 4 5** **1 2 3 4 5** **1 2 3 4 5** **1 2 3 4 5**	
18	Informal teacher leadership roles are recognized.	**1 2 3 4 5**	
19	Professional development is focused and long term.	**1 2 3 4 5**	
Teaching and Learning			
20	Instruction is differentiated to address students with special needs, while challenging all students.	**1 2 3 4 5**	
21	Researched strategies that account for various learning styles are used in classrooms.	**1 2 3 4 5**	
22	Connections are made to students' culture and prior knowledge.	**1 2 3 4 5**	

23	Teaching strategies accommodate the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse learners using a variety of grouping strategies, hands-on activities, visuals, oral language development, reading/writing workshops, etc.	**1 2 3 4 5**	
Parents and Outer Community			
24	Community outreach programs regularly survey the perspectives of various local community constituency and stakeholder groups, including parents.	**1 2 3 4 5**	
25	Parent involvement programs exist for all culture groups.	**1 2 3 4 5**	
26	National and global ties are established through partnerships with similar organizations.	**1 2 3 4 5**	
27	The electronic community is realized and utilized for relationship building and sourcing best practices.	**1 2 3 4 5**	
Conflict Management			
28	The inevitability of intercultural conflict is recognized by peer mediation programs and/or other proactive approaches to conflict resolution.	**1 2 3 4 5**	
29	Practices to ensure classroom and school safety for all are in place (e.g. including systems for addressing bullying or developing positive student relations).	**1 2 3 4 5**	
Assessments			
30	Authentic student assessments are used to complement standardized tests.	**1 2 3 4 5**	
31	Formative and summative program evaluations are conducted to ensure continual improvement.	**1 2 3 4 5**	
32	Teachers and administrators are evaluated by various constituency groups (other teachers, students, colleagues, self, supervisor, etc.).	**1 2 3 4 5**	
33	Organizational traditions are examined periodically to check for exclusive/inclusive practices.	**1 2 3 4 5**	

34	Celebrations reflect various cultures and introduce the community to new cultures. Representation at events and celebrations is diverse.	**1 2 3 4 5**	

General Observations:

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