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One Size Does Not Fit All: An External Leader's Process Towards Supporting Positive Mental Health in Schools

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An External Leader's Process Towards Supporting Positive Mental Health in Schools

by

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Abstract

With the growing societal, personal, and financial costs related to unaddressed mental health issues (Smetanin et al., 2011), the World Health Organization [WHO] (2004) urges stakeholders to start with preventative work. The premise is to focus upstream of the plethora of potential consequences and to address these issues before they become problematic. The WHO (2004) further suggests starting with children and youth, which are, for the most part, in schools. While this seems a logical starting place, research suggests that it is essential to be well in order to teach others to be well (Acton & Glasgow, 2015; Ontario Principals' Council, 2017; Roffey, 2012). Unfortunately, Smetanin et al. (2011) estimate that one in every five Canadian is affected by mental health challenges each year. It is thus assumed that those who are tasked with supporting student resiliency building may also be struggling, which may impact school leaders and staff work performance, their relationships with colleagues and students, and even affect students' grades and satisfaction with school (Koenig, Rodger, & Specht, 2017; Pollock, 2016). As such, to address this issue, this *Organizational Improvement Plan* proposes to focus on this audience. However, as the change leader is external to the organization, change is enacted through influence and at arm's length. Therefore, the problem of practice considers how a consultant can support these stakeholders towards promoting positive professional mental health practices at school through various processes and frameworks.

Keywords: External change agent, Organizational change, Change framework, Adaptive leadership, Mental health, Prevention.

Executive Summary

When significant societal challenges arise, such as consequences related to unaddressed mental health issues (Smetanin et al., 2011), coordinated help is needed by a variety of people in different contexts to achieve a successful resolution. However, as Albee (1990) indicates, while mental health issues are treatable, there are insufficient mental health professionals available to attend to all those in need, which in Canada represents 20% of the population (Smetanin et al., 2011). Because of the enormity of the task at hand, to achieve a favourable outcome pertaining to this topic, a narrower scope of practice is necessary. Thus, to refine the required work, the World Health Organization [WHO] (2004) recommends a preventative approach targeting children and youth, most of whom attend school. While principals and teachers agree that taking a proactive approach towards supporting student mental health is key (INTERCAMHS & ICP, 2009; Santor, Short, & Ferguson, 2009; Short, Ferguson, & Santor, 2011), research indicates that to teach well-being, one must be well (Acton & Glasgow, 2015; Ontario Principals' Council, 2017; Roffey, 2012). Furthermore, since an estimated 6.7 million Canadians are struggling with mental health concerns, it is plausible to assume that school leaders and their staff are also included in these numbers. Therefore, as this audience is best positioned to aid students, the focus of this *Organizational Improvement Plan* (OIP) is to support school leaders and their teams to sustainably broaden their professional practices that promote positive mental health. However, as the change agent is external to the education system, to achieve this objective, potential solutions need to consider the indirect quality of their role.

As a consultant influences change at arm's length, their main tools are themselves (e.g., through their leadership models), their change frameworks and their processes. To inform the selection and development of meaningful tools, it is critical for consultants to know which

conditions promote and hinder positive mental health for these stakeholders, and to ground their work in solid leadership approaches that pertain to their unique role. As such, chapter 1 identifies certain conditions that promote positive mental health for school leaders and their staff. These include, being engaged from the outset (Rapp, Gilson, Mathieu, & Ruddy, 2016; Whelan-Berry & Somerville, 2010), working in small teams (Bolman & Deal, 2013; Kotter, 1996), participating in decision-making (Leithwood, 2006) and having high-quality communication processes (Dimoff & Kelloway, 2013; Kuoppala, Lamminpää, Liira, & Vainio, 2008; Leithwood, 2006; Roffey, 2012). The chapter also unpacks two different leadership models. First, the *Adaptive Leadership* (Heifetz, 1994) model is proposed as a way for the consultant to apply leadership, whereas the second is a hybrid model named the *ALT Leadership Model*, which proposes a way of being a leader. The latter is based upon *Authentic Leadership, Leader Member Exchange* and *Transformational Leadership.* This model was developed to meet the particular needs of a consultant, as authentic attention to building relationships so *Transformational Leadership* becomes possible.

Chapter 2 takes the conditions that promote positive mental health and incorporate these into a new change framework—*Action-Driven Change Framework*—and related processes, such as *Design Thinking* and the *Learning Cascade*. The reason for including these conditions in these tools is twofold. First, a consultant is only temporary in a school's change initiative, whereas resources and processes can be embedded within the fabric of the organization and can carry on even when the consultant is no longer working with the school. Second, as no "one size fits all" solution can resolve the consequences related to unaddressed mental health issues, building capacity towards finding locally relevant solutions through processes that promote positive mental health is a means for a consultant to influence change in this area.

Finally, chapter 3 unpacks a proposed solution identified in chapter 2, which is to develop a toolkit with an aligned and differentiated learning offering, followed by implementation coaching supports so schools are able uptake professional practices that promote positive mental health. In this section, implementation, monitoring and communication plans are detailed with the purpose to influence sustainable change leadership practices through knowledge, resources and supports. Specifically, the implicit theory of change is: If relevant resources and learning opportunities are offered to school leaders and their teams, and coaching supports are available to model the first iteration of the change framework, then sustainable uptake of the change process will occur.

In conclusion, while this theory of action and related tools, plans and processes aim to address the problem of practice, as this OIP is a theoretical quality improvement plan, these have not yet been piloted nor tested through the rigours of a research design. While these are tangible limitations, they also present as opportunities for the fields of mental health and education as researchers can both test and refine the proposed tools, frameworks and models.

Acknowledgments

This doctoral journey has been an absolute life-changing experience. It has been excessively challenging, yet I would not have wanted it any other way. I am forever grateful to all of my professors who have inspired me to always move beyond what I thought was possible and to trust the learning process. In addition, I would like to offer a heartfelt "thank you" to Dr. Cheryl Bauman-Buffone, my advisor, who particularly pushed me during the OIP writing process.

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Most importantly, I would like to extend my love, admiration and gratitude to my loving family. My husband Charles and my two children, Elizabeth and Anthony have been the most supportive people I have ever known. I needed to make many sacrifices over these past three years, sacrifices that directly impacted these wonderful individuals. However, never did they complain or make me feel bad about the difficult choices that were required to be successful in this program. They encouraged me and loved me unconditionally. I am truly lucky.

Finally, during these three years, many unforeseen obstacles came my way. However, big or small, I always had the support of the EdD program, my professors, my fellow cohort classmates, and most importantly, my family. This supportive environment allowed me to roll up my sleeves, not get discouraged—for too long—and find creative solutions to power through and meet the tight 3-year deadline. While this necessitated a lot of hard work and long hours on my part, I am happy with the result of my educational journey. Thank you.

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Glossary of Terms

Adaptive Leadership: "…mobilizing people to tackle tough problems" (Heifetz, 1994, p. 15).

Authentic leadership: "…the relational nature of authentic leadership, and focused on the development of authentic relationships, which is a core component process in authentic leadership development" (Avolio & Gardner, 2005, p. 333).

Brainstorming: "…divergent thinking is to multiply options to create choices" (Brown, 2009, p. 67). "Brainstorming, ironically, is a structured way of breaking out of structure" (Brown, 2009, p. 78).

Bureaucracy: "a system of administration marked by officialism, red tape, and proliferation" (Bureaucracy, n.d.).

Butterfly: "Convergent thinking is a practical way of deciding among existing alternatives" (Brown, 2009, p. 66). After a brainstorming session, "members of the team flutter about the room inspecting the tableau of ideas, and before long it is clear which ones have attracted the most "butterflies"… The process is not about democracy, it is about maximizing the capacities of teams to converge on the best solutions" (Brown, 2009, p. 83).

Client: "A person who engages the professional advice or services of another" (Client, n.d.).

Change driver: "events, activities, or behaviors that facilitate the implementation of change" (Whelan-Berry & Summerville, 2010, p. 176).

Consultant: "One who gives professional advice or services" (Consultant, n.d.).

Design Thinking: "…harder problem that requires more systems thinking, that requires prototyping and piloting. That's really where designers are most adept" (Liedtka & Ogilvie, 2011, p. 13). "Design thinking relies on our ability to be intuitive, to recognize

patterns, to construct ideas that have emotional meaning as well as functionality, to express ourselves in media other than words or symbols" (Brown, 2009, p. 4).

External change agent: "Individuals who are affiliated with an outside entity who formally influence or facilitate intervention decisions in a desirable direction. They usu-ally have professional training in a technical field related to organizational change science or in the technology being introduced into the organization" (Damschroder et al., 2009, p. 11).

Implementation science: Is the study which "improves the translation of research for intervention dissemination, implementation, and sustainability" (Koh, Lee, Brotzman, & Shelton, 2018, p. 1).

Journey Mapping: "…is the visual representation, in a flowchart or other graphic format, of the customer's experience as he or she interacts with your company in receiving its product or service. These maps can depict the customer's actual or ideal journey" (Liedtka & Ogilvie, 2011, p. 61).

Lateral coordination: "Lateral forms are typically less formal and more flexible than authority-bound systems and rules. They are often simpler and quicker as well" (Bolman & Deal, 2013, p. 54).

Leader Member eXchange (LMX): *"*LMX should be viewed as systems of interdependent dyadic relationships, or network assemblies" (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995, p. 233).

Mental health: is described by the World Health Organization as "... a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community (WHO 2001a, p.1)".

Problem: "a question raised for inquiry, consideration, or solution" (Problem, n.d.).

Professional bureaucracy: Professionals in this type of structures work environment have a high level of autonomy in their decision-making processes and the approaches they adopt with their clients (Bolman & Deal, 2013).

Rapid prototyping: "is the creation of a visual (and sometimes experiential) manifestations of concepts. It is an iterative set of activities, done quickly, aimed at transforming the concepts generated (…) into feasible, testable models" (Liedtka & Ogilvie, 2011, p. 141).

Self-actualization: "to realize fully one's potential" (Self-actualization, n.d.).

Transactional leadership: "A leader is transactional when the follower is rewarded (…) for meeting agreements and standards or [chastised] for failing in what was supposed to be done" (Bass, 2008, p. 618).

Transformational leadership: "Transformational leaders motivate their followers to do more than the followers originally intended and thought possible" (Bass, 2008, p. 618).

Vertical structure: "With vertical coordination, higher levels coordinate and control the work of subordinates through authority, rules and policies, and planning and control systems" (Bolman & Deal, 2013).

Vision: "Visions are goals that are forward-looking and meaningful to followers. They involve accurately interpreting trends or articulating future-orienting organizational goals. They provide a road map to the future with emotional appeal to followers" (Bass, 2008, p. 629).

Work intensification: "…a phenomenon defined by an increasing volume and complexity of school leaders' work, roles and responsibilities" (Ontario Principals' Council, 2017, p. i).

Scapegoat: "one that bears the blame for others" (Scapegoat, n.d.).

Chapter 1 - Setting the Stage

An *Organizational Improvement Plan* (OIP) "is a major persuasive research paper that provides evidence-based pathways to address organizational problems and, more broadly, serve the public and/or social good" (Western University, 2017). To achieve its purpose, the present document is divided into three chapters. The first of these chapters serves as the foundation for the analysis of a particular problem under investigation. Specifically, contextualizes the organization under investigation, unpacks concepts such as, leadership focus and sphere of influence and suggests a problem of practice that anchors the subsequent chapters towards addressing the identified issue.

Organizational Context

The organization, in which this OIP is framed, is a small bilingual consulting firm—hereafter referred to as "the firm"—located in Canada. At a glance, the primary aim of the firm is to support organizations in their process towards improving a situation they identified as problematic. Usually, presenting issues are related to the fields of education, mental health and implementation science. For this reason, consultants within the firm are hired for their experience and expertise pertaining to these three fields.

The task of the consultant—which is the role of the present author—is to aid clients to identify their specific issue and to provide learning opportunities on how to utilize a contextual change process through practice and support. The intention is to build the client's confidence in applying the selected approach in an ongoing manner, even when the consultant is no longer working alongside the client's organization. To achieve this objective, consultants within the firm, offer their services directly to leaders and their teams. The purpose of targeting these

stakeholders is to build the organization's internal skill related to change leadership and their capacity to implement a change process that are specific to their context and problem.

While the above overview highlights the firm's focus in general terms, a more specific change process is explored in the *Leadership Problem of Practice* section. To help build the ramp towards this portion of the text, the following section delves deeper into the purpose and aims of the firm.

Vision, Mission, Goals and Values

The vision of the firm is to aid organizations to build their internal capacity towards sustainable organizational change (The firm, 2018). To achieve this, consultants critically support their clients to have the knowledge, skills and competency to address their contextual issues and find their relevant solutions. This is further reflected in the firm's mission statement, which is to "support organizations to sustainably move from knowing about an issue to acting upon it" (The firm, 2018). Thus the main objective of the firm is to help leaders and their teams bridge their own knowledge to action gap (i.e., to move from identifying an issue to selecting and applying solutions that can help address their concerns perpetually). A successful outcome of this goal occurs when an organization has successfully incorporated and adopted their selected solution into their daily practices and procedures.

To help facilitate this process, consultants build upon clients' current skills, commitment and capacity, as the firm believes that all individuals have a variety of strengths to pull from (Park, Peterson, & Seligman, 2004) and have the agency and motivation to act towards self-actualization (Joseph & Murphy, 2013; Rogers, 1961; 1980). As such, consultants aid leaders and their teams enact a cycle of ongoing, congruent and contextual improvement towards their organization's change vision.

Other than the above-mentioned vision, mission and goals, the firm believes in acting authentically (further discussed in *Leadership Approaches: Principles and Being* section), specifically where consultants model the core values of the firm in the work that they do (Whelan-Berry & Somerville, 2010). The values in question are: acting with respect, integrity, innovation, creativity, understanding, and compassion (The firm, 2018). For example, a consultant builds relationships based on mutual respect and acts with integrity. This helps promote trust between parties (Bluckert, 2005; Boies, Fiset, & Gill, 2015; Zhu, Newman, Miao, & Hooke, 2013). In addition, by listening to clients' context, needs, and concerns, the consultant is able to take a step back and understand with compassion what they are recounting and how they are facing their particular problems (Hettema, Ernst, Williams, & Miller, 2014; Kelloway, Turner, Barling, & Loughlin, 2012; Whelan-Berry & Somerville, 2010). These values are the essential stepping-stones for consultants to favour a collaborative working partnership with their clients (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009; Heifetz, 1994; Martin, 2009) towards generating and trying creative and innovative solutions to overcome the identified organizational issues.

Other than these "stepping-stones", to meet the vision of promoting sustainable organizational change, an intentional focus related to implementation science and the position of the consultant within the organization is required.

Implementation Science

While having a vision is essential, it is not sufficient in and of itself. To achieve a set vision requires thought and planning. This is known as an implementation process. This process, according to Damschroder et al.'s (2009) definition, is "the constellation of processes intended to get an intervention into use within an organization (…) during which targeted stakeholders become increasingly skilful, consistent, and committed in their use of an intervention" (p. 3). The

"constellation" mentioned by the authors refers to the many domains and constructs that may influence an implementation process and its outcomes. These are articulated in Damschroder et al.'s (2009) *Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research* (CFIR), which are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1

List of CFIR Domains and Their Related Constructs

Domains	Related Constructs
Outer Setting	[Stakeholder] needs and resources (including barriers and facilitators); Cosmopolitanism; Peer pressure; External policies and incentives.
Inner Setting	Structural characteristics; Networks and communication; Culture.
Implementation Climate	Tension for change; Compatibility; Relative priority; Organizational incentives and rewards; Goals and feedback; Learning climate.
Readiness for Implementation	Leadership engagement; Available resources; Access to information and knowledge.
Characteristics of Individuals	Knowledge and beliefs about the intervention; Self-efficacy; Individual stage of change; Individual identification with the organization; Other personal attributes.
Intervention Characteristics	Intervention source; Evidence strength and quality; Relative advantage; Adaptability; Trialability; Complexity; Design quality and packaging; Cost.
Implementation Processes	Planning (stakeholders; needs and perspectives; tailored strategies; communication; milestones; trials); Engaging; (opinion leaders, both formal and/or informal; internal implementation leaders; champions; external change agents); Executing; Reflecting; Evaluating.

Note. This table represents the five domains and their related constructs to consider in an implementation process. Adapted from "Fostering Implementation of Health Services Research Findings into Practice: A Consolidated Framework for Advancing Implementation Science" by L. J. Damschroder, D. C. Aron, R. E. Keith, S. R. Kirsh, J. A. Alexander and J. C. Lowery, 2009, *Implementation Science, 4*(1), 1-15.

Interestingly, the *Implementation Process*, as highlighted in Table 1, underscores the importance of planning, engaging, executing, reflecting and evaluating, however, many additional elements can influence the implementation process during any of these phases. These

elements, which are the four other domains and their related constructs, are to be considered in an ongoing way. For example, it is fundamental to actively engage with the variety of stakeholders—both from the outer and inter settings—who either are applying or are impacted by the new solution (Fixsen, Naoom, Blase, Friedman, & Wallace, 2005). Thus, meaningful activities initiated from the outset, such as participating in: defining the problem, shaping the solutions, adopting the selected intervention and disseminating it to their networks (Keown, Van Eerd, & Irvin, 2008; Phillipson, Lowe, Proctor, & Ruto, 2012) aids with an authentic engagement process.

The engagement and implementation processes are a shared responsibility. As such, in addition to the positional leader, the CFIR (Damschroder et al., 2009) proposes that a collaborative effort is needed from a variety of leaders to achieve a set vision for change. These leaders include: (1) Formal and informal opinion leaders: who influence others through their credibility or their authority; (2) Internal implementation leaders: who formally coordinate the implementation of the intervention; (3) Champions: who influence uptake through their strong belief and adoption of the proposed practice; and (4) External change agents: who support and influence decision-making towards the desired outcome through their expertise related to the subject area and implementation knowledge.

The firm recognizes that while it does not have the sole responsibility to enact change, it has an important and complementary role in the implementation process, as the CFIR suggests. Thus, it is not a random occurrence that the firm's consultants are hired for their experience and expertise related to the field of mental health, education and implementation science. As the consultant supports the above-mentioned internal change agents to achieve their vision, the consultant aids internal leaders notice trends, keep their focus on broader issues, challenge

certain decisions and reflections, and builds capacity towards the uptake of the proposed solution. Fixsen et al. (2005) further suggest that a coach (i.e., external change agent) has an emotionally supportive role, provides technical assistance with the selected intervention and offers assessments and feedback to stakeholders applying their identified strategies. In other words, the consultant helps organizations that "cannot see the forest for the trees", focus on the big picture, all the while supporting them to build upon small goals and achievements.

However, in order to gain this broad view, the consultant must be strategically positioned within the client's organization to maximize their support. Therefore, knowing about the structures of the firm and that of the client's organization, which is the education system in a large Canadian province, is imperative.

Structure

Given that the firm is small and hires consultants who have expertise in the fields of mental health, education and implementation, its structure resembles that of a *professional bureaucracy* (Bolman & Deal, 2013). This suggests that consultants have a high level of professional autonomy in their decision-making processes and the approaches they adopt with their clients. Furthermore, because of the relatively small number of consultants and the nature of their expertise, the firm has a flat, collegial structure, that values collaboration, authentic relationships and equality between peers (Manning, 2018). The firm also favours *lateral coordination,* which promotes a collaborative problem-solving and decision-making process between consultants. While this approach may occasionally be time and resource intensive, it is useful when working on complex issues requiring a range of opinions and expertise. The added value of lateral related activities, such as meetings, networks, and task forces (Bolman & Deal,

2013; Kotter, 1996) is that they allow participants to take ownership of the proposed solutions (Rapp, Gilson, Mathieu, & Ruddy, 2016; Whelan-Berry & Somerville, 2010).

In contrast, the education system may be perceived as a *bureaucracy* structure (Manning, 2018), which has a more *vertical* configuration (Bolman & Deal, 2013). These authors highlight certain benefits of this structure, such as: (1) clearly defined roles and responsibilities for a large number of people within an organization, which helps avoid duplication of efforts towards achieving a common goal; (2) standardized approach, which promotes accountability; and (3) common outcomes. However, Manning (2018) suggests that bureaucracy hinders professional flexibility, creativity and innovativeness, which are key conditions for adapting to the ever-changing setting within the education system.

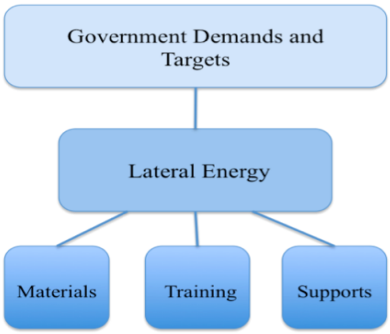

Figure 1. Representation of a "balanced" approach in education. Adapted from "The Fourth Way: The Inspiring Future for Educational Change." by A. Hargreaves, and D. Shirley, 2009, Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, Sage, p. 14.

Thus, when considering the structures of these two entities, it might not be readily apparent how an external change agent and the education system can find a common process that resonates for both parties. According to Damschroder et al.'s (2009) research, since consultants are external to any organization with which they work, they are required to adapt their strategy according to the structure and needs of their client. This process closely resembles the approach followed by the firm's professional bureaucracy structure (i.e., adapting to the needs of the client). In addition, in their book, Hargreaves and Shirley (2009) explain that historically, the *Second Way* was a rigid top down hierarchical approach in education that limited creativity and motivation. This would resemble the structure described by Bolman and Deal (2013) and Manning (2018). The *Third Way,* on the other hand, shifted towards a more balanced view of

top-down and bottom-up initiatives with a focus on lateral efforts (Figure 1). Thus, this "balance" seems to be the common ground upon which both parties involved in the professional relationship can build on each other's skills, and ensure a common language and understanding.

As such, despite the structural difference between the firm and the education system, the adaptation of consultants to their client's environment is key. Thus, to influence change, consultants go where they can influence and support the change process that is sought out, as there is not a "one-size-fits-all" solution to organizational change (Bullock, Watson & Goering, 2010; Grimshaw, Eccles, Lavis, Hill, & Squires, 2012; Ward, Smith, House, & Hamer, 2012; Waterman et al., 2015).

However, regardless of the consultant's position within the education system—at the school, board or ministry level—in accordance to the firm's approach, they work alongside a leader and their teams.

Leadership Position and Lenses

While a consultant can facilitate change at any level within the vast education system, the area of focus for this OIP is at the school level. In this context, the consultant works with school administrators and their team. Although the area of interest is schools, the focus is not on one in particular. Rather, this paper is process-driven, which implies that the attention is on unpacking implementation processes and reflective practices to help schools identify their issues and generate their own contextually relevant solutions. This approach resembles the *Appreciative Inquiry* approach to leadership, which involves: " … the art and practice of asking questions that strengthen a system's capacity to apprehend, anticipate, and heighten positive potential" (Cooperrider, Whitney, & Stavros, 2008, p. 3). This process seeks to aid the positional leader and their teams to articulate their own issues, to generate their unique solutions and to carry them out.

Conversely, it is not the focus of this paper to determine how the firm comes to work with schools, how it engages with unions, or if the firm has sufficient resources to support all schools in Canada. While these are noteworthy questions, they are not addressed at this time.

Leadership Approaches: Process and Being

Change implies that one must actively *do* something to achieve the desired outcomes. In a change process, as highlighted in Table 1, many individuals are involved in actualizing an established vision, such as internal and external change agents. As mentioned, their roles and responsibilities are complementary, but differ. For a consultant, due to the "arm's length" nature of their work, "actions" towards change support the internal leaders and their teams, who are ultimately the ones responsible for enacting their implementation plan. Because of this indirect leadership reality the preferred foundational leadership approach is that of *Adaptive Leadership* (Heifetz, 1994; Norton, 2010; Yukl & Mahsud, 2010).

Process. *Adaptive leadership* is an approach that is follower-centred and process-driven, which is enacted within what the author describes as a holding environment (Heifetz, 1994). Stemming from a humanistic (Rogers, 1961; 1980) approach, and influenced by Heifetz' psychiatry background, this "holding environment" is a safe, empathetic and trusting relationship-based setting meant to support individuals during the adaptive work process.

According to this leadership approach, one must first determine the type of challenge the organization is facing. To do so, Heifetz (1994) suggests, "getting on the balcony", which allows the observer to take a step back from the situation in order to see more broadly and clearly. This approach is similar to what the consultant does when they help organizations that "cannot see the forest for the trees". Thus, with this perspective, the adaptive leader (i.e., the consultant) with the internal change agents and their team first determine what type of challenge they are facing (see

Table 2). Specifically, is the problem: *Technical* (i.e., there is a clear answer to the problem, which, when applied can resolve the issue); *Technical and Adaptive* (i.e., where the "expert" can only influence change by providing recommendations to a defined problem, to the stakeholder who ultimately are the ones implementing the solution); or *Adaptive* (i.e., where the problem is complex and the potential answers are not evident). This last type requires a learning process from both the adaptive leader and the stakeholders to first define the issue, find innovative solutions, and then learn how to implement the proposed innovative solutions.

Table 2

Distinguishing Between Technical and Adaptive Problems.

Type of Problem	Defining the Problem	Solution	Who is Responsible?
Technical	Evident	Evident	Authority
Technical and Adaptive	Evident	Not evident. Needs learning and innovation.	Authority and Stakeholders
Adaptive	Not evident. Needs research.	Not evident. Needs learning and innovation.	Stakeholders

Note. The main differences between a technical problem and an adaptive one stems from their definition, potential solutions and sphere of control towards resolving the issue, and where the options range from being evident to requiring some research, learning and innovation. Adapted from "The Practice of Adaptive Leadership" by R. Heifetz, A. Grashow and M. Linsky, 2009, Harvard Business Review Press, p. 20.

When a situation is either a technical/adaptive or an adaptive challenge, Heifetz (1994) recommends that the leader follow five principles:

1. Determine the presenting problem (i.e., technical, technical/adaptive or adaptive);
2. Maintain a tolerable level of distress (i.e., stakeholders stay energized by the work);
3. Stay focused on the main issue, rather shifting towards a less stress-provoking one;
4. Empower stakeholders impacted by the issue to address the issue themselves;
5. Maintain a safe environment and provide an equitable opportunity for everyone to speak and contribute.

The rationale behind the prioritization of this leadership method is threefold: (1) the approach is follower-centric, where the purpose is to support leaders and teams to find creative solutions to the unique and complex challenges that they are facing; (2) adaptive leadership is not necessarily a role needing positional authority, rather it is a way to motivate and mobilize a group towards a desired change—as consultants are external change agents, positional power is not possible; and finally (3) the leader within this frame adapts their behaviours and interventions according to presenting issues and contexts—which aligns with the firm's conviction that each situation and organization is unique, thus cannot be addressed using a one-size-fits-all solution.

The application of this leadership approach is demonstrated in *Framework for Leading the Change Process: How to Change* section found in chapter 2.

Being. In addition to the adaptive leadership process, a consultant also has a unique way of *being* a leader. Given that consultants are external to work environments, an intentional focus on authentic relationship building is essential prior to applying *Transformational Leadership.* This reflection led to the development of an eclectic leadership style, named the *ALT Leadership Model* (Figure 2).

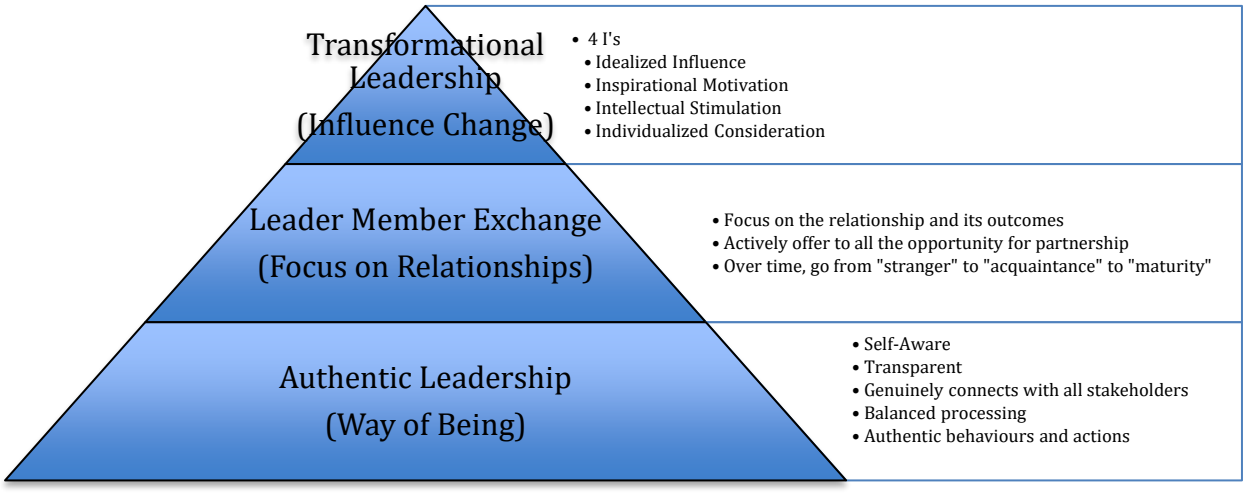

Figure 2. The ALT Leadership Model.

Inspired by Riel and Martin's (2017) "pro/pro" activity (i.e., where one pulls from the strengths of existing theories to propose a new configuration that resonates with the reality of its user), the *ALT Leadership Model* pulls from the following theories: *Authentic Leadership, Leader-Member Exchange* (LMX) and *Transformational Leadership*.

As the consultant is not a positional leader, the scope of practice becomes that of leading with influence and building the organization's capacity to flourish on their own. Because of this reality, *Transformational Leadership* was determined to be the best approach to achieve this objective (Bass, 2008; Braun, Peus, Weisweiler, & Frey, 2013; Dumdum, Lowe, & Avolio, 2013). Specifically, the "4 I's": (1) Idealized Influence—achieved through credibility; (2) Inspirational Motivation—reaching a desired change vision; (3) Intellectual Stimulation—where stakeholders identify their issue and pursue relevant solutions; and (4) Individualized Consideration—to empathize with the client's challenges and needs (Bass, 2008). However, as the consultant leads change indirectly, a vital step is to develop positive, respectful and trusting relationships (Zhu et al., 2013) with the client to influence organizational outcomes (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Authentic relationships also support the development of an effective holding environment (Heifetz, 1994), which is a key element in the *Adaptive Leadership* process. Because of the importance of building relationships—which is explored in more depth in the *Relationships Matter* section in chapter 2—*LMX* theory was selected (Gerstner & Day, 1997; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). The approach highlights how relationships are developed over time, moving from a new relationship status (i.e., stranger) towards a collaborative partnership (i.e., mature). It is when a relationship reaches "maturity" that leadership can shift from being *transactional* (i.e., acquaintance level) towards being a *transformational* leader (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). As such, by building upon growing relationships, the aim of the consultant is to

credibly (Bozer, Sarros, & Santora, 2014; Waterman et al., 2015) inspire and motivate their clients to achieve their change vision (Bass, 2008). Finally, *Authentic Leadership* (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Cooper, Scandura, & Schriesheim, 2005; Ilies, Morgeson, & Nahrgang, 2005) anchors the *ALT Leadership Model.* Avolio and Gardner (2005) call authenticity the "root construct" of leadership, as they view this behaviour as the basis for other positive leadership theories. They suggest that authenticity is found on a continuum that is always in movement, but where one strives to act and behave in ways that are authentic, moral and ethical towards self and others. It is thus through this way of *being* genuine that the consultant engages in meaningful working relationships that support the realization of their vision.

To support the application of the *ALT Leadership Model,* a guide has been developed (Appendix A). Briefly, the tool unpacks the layers of the model and subdivides them into areas of focus, which include activities and self-reflection questions. These targeted sections are informed by Heifetz's (1994) *Adaptive Leadership* model, Rogers' (1961, 1980) Humanistic approach—discussed in the following section—and Bass' (2008) *Transformational Leadership* model and which is further discussed in chapter 2.

In addition to these leadership models, the preferred theoretical lenses also require attention, as they influence how a situation is perceived, as well as any proposed solutions.

Leadership Theoretical Lenses

The underpinning theoretical lenses in the present OIP are Rogers' Humanistic approach (Joseph & Murphy, 2013; Rogers, 1961; 1980) and Bronfenbrenner's (2005) Ecological Systems Theory. The former theory aligns with the firm's vision for change, which agrees that individuals have the agency to change their circumstances (Rogers, 1961; 1980); whereas the latter theory, considers the interaction between an individual and their environment.

More specifically, as the Humanistic approach indicates that individuals have the necessary agency to change their situation, the consultant aims to support growth through a client-centred approach. To enable this process, three core conditions are required: congruency—where the leader is authentic in the working relationship; accurate empathy—where there is an understanding of the client's point of view as well as reflecting back what was shared, and unconditional positive regard—where the consultant takes a non-judgmental stance (Rogers, 1961; 1980). Over time, however, Rogers (1980) recognized that the interaction within a relationship flows both ways (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Therefore, he added three more conditions to his approach. First the consultant communicates their empathy and understanding towards the client; whereas the client's contribution to the rapport is to be genuinely engaged in the working relationship with the consultant, and open to the intervention.

When considering these conditions, many connections can be made to the *ALT Leadership Model*. For example, an *adaptive* leader must first create a "holding environment" to allow clients to feel safe and understood so they are better able to address their complex issue. This environment's foundation is authenticity, which acts as a catalyst to promote genuine and trusting relationships. Trust allows for a consultant to focus on the 4 I's (see Figure 2) within the *Transformational Leadership* model in order to support clients to achieve their desired vision.

Moreover, as clients are both "influenced by" and also "influencers of" the people, networks and levels within a system, Bronfenbrenner (1979, 1992) theory was privileged. Figure 3 provides a visual representation of this theory, demonstrating that the interactions that take place between various layers of a social system can influence an individual's situation and vice-versa. The identified layers are: the microsystem—the direct interaction between the individual and others (e.g., the school leader interaction with their staff and students); the

mesosystem—the interaction between two or more settings to which the individual belongs (e.g., home and school); the exosystem—the interaction between two or more settings, one of which does not directly include the individual, but affects them, (e.g., school and staff home life); and the macrosystem—the system that includes the previous systems and the broader social and cultural context (e.g., school board, ministry of education and political parties).

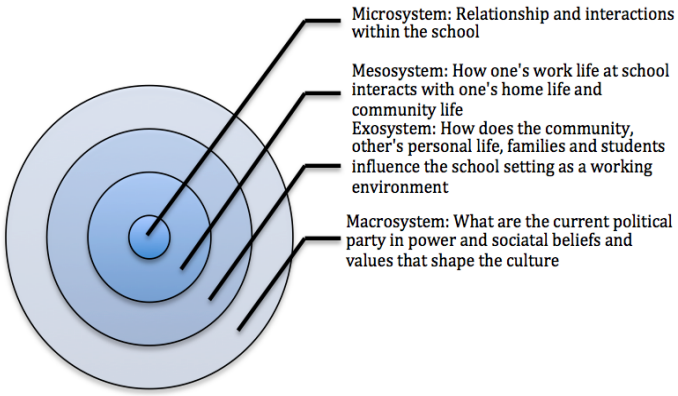

Figure 3. Representation of Bronfenbrenner's (1992) "Ecological Systems Theory".

Subsequent to his initial work, Bronfenbrenner added in 1992, the notion that individuals are not only influenced by their environment, but they also influence it, thus acknowledging that there is reciprocity between the system and the individuals within it. This addition is important, as it aligns with Rogers' (1961; 1980) conceptualization that individual's agency to change their circumstances. Furthermore, Bronfenbrenner (1992) included the dimension of time to his theory, as he also realized that while it is essential to consider an individual and a situation within their system, it is pivotal to recognize that context is not constant over time.

Thus, the three reasons for including the Ecological Systems Theory as a theoretical lens are: (1) numerous variables can influence a situation; (2) each situation is unique in time and in context; and (3) these layers help to frame a problem, envision potential solutions and plan its implementation, similar to dimensions within CFIR (Table 1). As such, this lens permits to look beyond the "symptoms" of the problem and move towards noticing other spheres that may contribute to the situation. Furthermore, understanding how context changes over time acknowledge that a previously successful solution may no longer be relevant.

Building upon the core values of the firm, the above-mentioned theoretical lenses and a dual leadership approach based on *principles* and *being*, the consultant becomes an influencer and enabler for change. Specifically, through the *ALT Leadership Model* and the *Adaptive Leadership* approach, school leaders and their teams are empowered to resolve their complex, multilayered and contextual issues. However, as Damschroder et al. (2009) underscore, a consultant is sought out for their knowledge in a specific topic area and for their implementation expertise. Therefore, the "complex, multilayered and contextual issues" considered in this OIP occurs concurrently within the fields of mental health and education.

Leadership Problem of Practice

As a registered social worker, the consultant's area of knowledge and experience are within the field of mental health. Thus, the problem of practice (PoP) under investigation takes into consideration the consultant's sphere of influence as it relates to the field of mental health and education. However, before identifying a PoP, it is necessary to unpack some consequences associated with mental health challenges, which are considered through an ecological lens.

Ecological Framing of Mental Health Issues and their Consequences

Mental health issues take a significant toll worldwide on individuals, families, communities and countries. Smetanin et al. (2011) estimate that one in every five Canadian is affected by mental health challenges each year, which represents roughly 6.7 million people (Smetanin et al., 2011). The Mental Health Commission of Canada [MHCC] (2013) further indicates that the financial burden related to these issues is approximately $50 billion per year. The study adds that if the current trend of expenses related to mental illness were maintained, by 2041, the cumulative costs for the Canadian economy would be upward of $2.5 trillion.

Mental health challenges have different consequences within the diverse levels of the ecological system. For example, organizations are affected by diminished productivity, high turnover rates and absenteeism, as well as low job satisfaction (Dimoff & Kelloway, 2013; Harms, Credé, Tynan, Leon, & Jeung, 2017). Individuals, on the other hand, are impacted by a wide variety of physical, psychological and/or behavioural signs and symptoms (Dimoff & Kelloway, 2013). While the root causes of mental health difficulties are numerous (e.g., child abuse, war, discrimination, marginalization, poverty, intergenerational mental illness, etc.), effective prevention can "reduce risk factors, strengthen protective factors and decrease psychiatric symptoms and disability and the onset of some mental disorders" (World Health Organization [WHO], 2004, p. 13). While mental illness can effectively be treated (MHCC, 2013), Albee (1990) indicates that there are not enough mental health professionals available to treat every individual in need. This further reinforces the importance of an upstream approach, which first targets children and youth, who are mostly in schools (Santor, Short, & Ferguson, 2009; School Based Mental Health and Substance Abuse [SBMHSA] Consortium, 2013; WHO, 2004). This preventative work thus focuses on developing students lifelong coping skills at an early age (MHCC, 2012; People for Education, 2018).

To support this preventative work, teachers and school administrators are well positioned to model and teach their students to develop resiliency and social-emotional learning skills (Anthony & McLean, 2015; Clarke & Barry, 2015; Fazel, Hoagwood, Stephan, & Ford, 2014). However, given that 20% of Canadians suffer from mental health challenges each year (Smetanin et al., 2011), it is logical to assume that school administrators and teachers are also included in this number and may be struggling at times. As research indicates that in order to teach students to be well, school staff, teachers and school administrators must also be well

(Acton & Glasgow, 2015; Ontario Principals' Council [OPC], 2017; Roffey, 2012). Therefore, the preventative focus of this OIP targets these audiences.

While addressing staff and leader well-being is primarily the responsibility of the school administrator, they are not expected to work beyond their scope of practice (i.e., they are not mental health professionals). Nor are they asked to work alone to resolve the issues stemming from mental health challenges in their school environment. Even with a commitment to address this broad issue, the school leader and their team may not know which problem to focus on, or how to overcome it. This, however, is within the consultant's sphere of influence. Therefore, the problem of practice under investigation considers the processes used by the external change agent to effectively support school leaders and their teams who are seeking to adopt professional practices that promote positive mental health.

Before addressing the PoP, however, it is considered within various spheres. As such, the following section explores the concepts of prevention, as well as students, teachers, and administrator well-being. The purpose of this exercise is to underscore the benefits of taking on this challenge and to help the external change agent identify certain structures and processes that can support schools work towards sustainable approaches meant to address this problem.

Framing the Problem of Practice

As organizational congruency is important for sustainability (Burton, Obel, & Døjbak, 2016), it is relevant to explore the school as a work environment, and the main stakeholders within it (i.e., students, teachers and school administrators). The rationale for this brief overview is meant to consider any similarities between these groups and to gather information that can inform future priorities, and, ultimately to identify professional practice processes that can

promote positive mental health. To begin, this section explains the concept of prevention to ensure clarity with terminology and the scope of proposed processes and solutions.

Breadth and Depth of Prevention

From a public health perspective (Figure 4), preventative activities fall into three categories: (a) Universal, where strategies target the entire population—in this case, the entire school community; (b) Selective, where the activities focus on those at risk of developing mental health issues; and (c) Indicated: where interventions target those at high risk of developing a mental health disorder (WHO, 2004; Santor et al., 2009). Within the school context, a layered approach means that leaders and staff work on incorporating daily professional practices at the universal level, which promotes positive mental health (Tier 1); offering an understanding and caring ear for those who are struggling and referring them to additional professional supports (Tier 2); and having processes and structures in place that ensure that those with more acute needs receive the attention and help they require (Tier 3). Briefly, the bottom, and largest, tier encompasses activities that are beneficial for the entire population. As you move up the tiers, the interventions become more targeted for stakeholder groups who need an individualized approach.

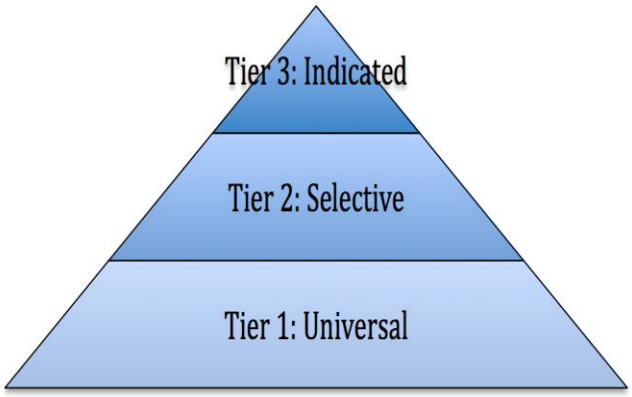

Figure 4. Layered approach to interventions from a public health perspective.

While having clear pathways to, through and from care is essential—and is an area where the consultant, in practice, can offer support—for the purpose of this OIP, however, the focused processes and proposed solutions are within the Tier 1 level.

Student Mental Health

According to SBMHSA's final report (2013), between 14%-25% of Canadian children and youth are or will struggle with mental health issues. These issues translate into difficulties with academic achievement, relationships and attendance (Santor et al., 2009; Short, Ferguson, & Santor, 2011; SBMHSA, 2013). Therefore, the purpose of promoting positive mental health practices at school helps achieve two key objectives: (a) circumvent the negative outcomes of unaddressed mental health issues on students' educational and life journey; and (b) proactively encourage positive mental health and well-being for all (Ontario Ministry of Education [MOE], 2014; MOE, 2016; SBMHSA, 2013; Student Achievement and School Board Governance Act, 2009; WHO, 2004).

Supporting Student Mental Health. To effectively address these objectives, research suggests focusing on the following three areas: (1) Aligning organizational structures and leadership capacity so they are congruent with the vision of school mental health; (2) Ensuring that resources and training related to mental health literacy are available for staff to support students' positive mental health, and; (3) Having implementation supports accessible to help with the uptake of new practices (Albers, Pattuwage, & Vaughan, 2017; Davis & Edwards, 2013; Fixsen et al., 2005; Grimshaw et al., 2012; Hughes, Tapp & Hughes, 2008; Pollock, Wang, & Hauseman, 2014; Salsberg, & Macaulay, 2013; Santor et al., 2009; SBMHSA, 2013; Ward et al., 2012).

Schools as Workplaces

In addition to the upstream work with children and youth, the WHO's (2004) report stresses that a prevention focus in the workplace helps alleviate job-related stress and contribute to the long-term prevention of mental health disorders.

As leaders, school administrators set the tone for their school environment—what they say and do must align with what they preach (Beisser, Peters, & Thacker, 2014). However, stress can influence how one leads, which can, in turn affect their followers stress outcomes (Harms et al., 2017; Naseer, Raja, Syed, Donia, & Darr, 2016; Skakon, Nielsen, Borg, & Guzman, 2010). This is true in the dyadic relationship between school administrators and teachers, and between the dynamic of teachers and their students (Falecki, 2015).

Leader Mental Health. On average, school leaders typically work 56 hours per week (Pollock et al., 2014; Riley, 2018). They have been subject to *work intensification* over the past few years (OPC, 2014; Pollock, 2016; Pollock et al., 2014) where high workloads have impacted their productivity, work-life balance and health. Surveyed principals indicated that their main sources of stress stem from the rhythm, intensity and volume of the work required for their job and the lack of time to effectively do it (Pollock et al., 2014; Riley, 2018). Skakon et al. (2010) underscore that stress and burnout diminish productivity, increases turnover rates and augments consumption of drugs and alcohol as a coping strategy. Furthermore, the resulting emotional depletion has a negative effect on any implementation process, as individuals lack the necessary energy to effect change (Damschroder et al., 2009). Finally, OPC (2017) drew attention to the fact that fewer teachers are interested in becoming a principal, and there is an increase in the number of current leaders taking early retirement, which potentially decreases the amount of talent to take on this important role. Interestingly, however, despite the challenges encountered in their role, school leaders remain positive about their work (People for Education, 2018), and 91% also indicated that they still believe the profession is worthwhile and that their school is a great place to work (Pollock et al., 2014).

Research on the topic of positive work environments also revealed that leader behaviour, such as support, integrity and transformational leadership, promotes employee well-being and reduces the negative effects of stress (Kelloway et al., 2012; Kuoppala, Lamminpää, Liira, & Vainio, 2008; Skakon et al., 2010). In addition, LMX also contributes to building trust and promoting job satisfaction (Kuoppala, et al., 2008 Little, Gooty, & Williams, 2016; Naseer et al., 2016). Thus, by adopting the above-mentioned leadership approaches, a school administrator contributes positively to their school environment.

Conversely, a few caveats to these leadership approaches must be considered. For example, Naseer et al. (2016) warn that having a high LMX relationship with a negative leader is detrimental to employees' well-being. They suggest that low LMX relationships act as a buffer to the negative effects related to abusive leadership, such as increased stress and absenteeism. Another consideration pertains to the generational gap of the new workforce (Anderson, Baur, Griffith, & Buckley, 2017; OPC, 2017). OPC's (2017) research suggests that millennials have different priorities than other generations, which can create a leadership challenge when applying leadership constructs as is, without adapting them to the situation. Specifically, Anderson et al.'s (2017) research indicates that this generational group is motivated by external rewards and recognition, present themselves as being entitled to promotions and have a preference for individualized work rather than collaboration. The traditional use of transformational leadership is therefore challenged when trying to motivate individuals intrinsically towards a collective goal. The authors suggest that a way to work around this issue is to frame the goals in a way that clearly articulates what the benefits are for the individual, adding praise and accountability benchmarks along the way. Furthermore, as communication strategies differ with millennials—the use of social media being a notable example—high-level LMX relationships may become

more challenging to achieve. It is suggested that immediate supervisors can counter this challenge by communicating frequently with their millennial staff, as this group values the opportunity for feedback and recognition. This might allow for the development of strong LMX relationships, albeit using a different approach previously adopted by the leader (i.e., virtual versus in-person communication). In other words, as adapted communication per stakeholder group is a key component towards building relationships between a leader and their team, school leaders need to: (a) pay attention to their current communication style and how others react to this; (b) explore alternative approaches if needed; (c) try a new solution; and (d) reassess the usefulness of their new strategy by determining their effectiveness in achieving their outcomes.

Leader mental health and the PoP. The above information aligns well with the *ALT Leadership Model*, as the research indicates how essential authentic and effective communication, relationships and transformational leadership are for school leaders. These findings can thus be integrated into proposed frameworks and processes, moving forward, which are further explored in chapter 2's *Possible Solutions to Address the Problem of Practice* section.

However, while leadership has been shown to impact staff well-being, it is not the only cause. Many other factors exist, some of which are discussed below.

Teacher Mental Health. The causes of mental health issues are complex. This is also true of teacher stress, as there are many potential triggers, such as work, leadership or work-life conflict. Teachers may feel overwhelmed at work for several reasons: the amount of responsibility required by their role, the multiple demands of their students needing more attention, and the lack of time to recuperate (Koenig et al., 2017; Falecki, 2015). This results in increased irritability, anxiety and feelings of powerlessness (Falecki, 2015). Furthermore, when working for a "low-quality" leader, employees demonstrated higher levels of stress, anxiety,

depression and increased absenteeism (Anderson et al., 2017). These above-mentioned stress-related consequences have many impacts. For example, they can affect the relationship between a teacher and their students, as well as impact their students' grades, satisfaction with school and their perception of being supported (Koenig et al., 2017).

A positive work environment, which promotes an increase in teachers' job satisfaction, includes elements such as having: a supportive leader and colleagues, opportunities to participate in decision-making, small work teams, and a high quality communication process within the school (Dimoff & Kelloway, 2013; Kuoppala et al., 2008; Leithwood, 2006; Roffey, 2012). According to Leithwood (2006), job satisfaction is a condition that promotes employee retention, organizational commitment, and contributes to student academic outcomes. In addition, such an environment favourably impacts teachers and students' relationships, resilience, communication, and their sense of being valued, respected and cared for (Roffey, 2012).

Teacher mental health and the PoP. The above-mentioned conditions, which promote a positive work environment, are essential to consider in the processes meant to support schools towards adopting processes that promote positive mental health. Thus, integrating these practices (i.e., having: a supportive leader and colleagues, opportunities to participate in decision-making, small work teams, and a high quality communication process within the school) into the proposed tools and frameworks, discussed in chapter 2, are key.

While these microsystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1992) interactions are important to consider when assessing a situation within a school setting—as they affect those who work directly with students—other systems, such as the mesosystem, also influence the concepts of mental health and well-being.

Work-life Conflict. Higgins, Duxbury, and Lyons' (2008) consider that work-life conflict has two main dimensions: "the practical aspects associated with time crunches and scheduling conflicts (…), and the perceptual aspect of feeling overwhelmed, overloaded or stressed by the pressures of multiple roles" (p. 9). School administrators and teachers have expressed that the sheer volume of tasks required by their job is a source of stress, thus it becomes essential to find a relevant balance that resonates for every individual (Spilt, Koomen, & Thijs, 2011). However, research suggests that addressing work-life balance is not a cookie-cutter solution that meets every individual's needs or context.

Work-life conflict and the PoP. In the above citation, Higgins et al. (2008) highlight that stress can be tangible (e.g., time constraints), or perceived (i.e., feeling overwhelmed). As such, as stress stems from a multitude of avenues, it is suggested that any proposed solutions towards achieving work-life balance needs to be multilayered, for example, considered at the individual and the organizational level (Acton & Glasgow, 2015; Prilleltensky, 2005). Thus, processes that support the PoP, would help school leaders and their teams consider the issue through an ecological lens prior to brainstorming potential solutions to address their identified issue. Other than a change framework, a helpful tool to help schools reflect upon these various layers is the PESTE (i.e., political, economical, social, technological and ecological) analysis.

A PESTE Analysis

In the co-development of the working agreement phase between the client and the consultant, an outline of the steps and processes is presented to ensure clarity of roles, responsibilities and other parameters, such as consents, data collection and so forth. Once an agreement is reached, the consultant, the school leader and their team meet—in-person or virtually—to openly discuss the agreed upon contract. For instance, who is tasked to keep the

information provided, how will it be used and stored (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). However, as highlighted by the Tri Council Policy Standards (Medical Research Council (Canada), Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, & Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, [Tri Council], 2014), when there is an increased difficulty to identify individuals, issues related to privacy diminish.

While these ethical parameters are clearly articulated and important to consider, the proposed processes and tools do not gather personal information, but rather are intended to help teams think through a common issue and inform their change process. An example of such a tool is the PESTE analysis (Cawsey, Deszca, & Ingols, 2016). The goal of this activity (Appendix B) is to support the internal leader and their teams to take a step back and take stock of what might be influencing their current situation, similar to Heifetz's (1994) "getting on the balcony".

With their co-created vision in hand (Miller & Rollnick, 2013), the school team and their leader review the PESTE categories and reflection questions (Cooperrider et al., 2008) to notice any potential obstacles and enablers that either prevent or support their change vision. The suggested questions help the school team consider these elements on multiple ecological levels (Bronfenbrenner, 1992) and aid them to ask deeper contextual questions. The data collected is then included in the template provided in Appendix C. The information gathered can stem from a variety of sources, such as anecdotal stories, existing data, or from grey literature. Additionally, if other questions emerge that were not posed in the PESTE tool, teams are invited to record these on the proposed template, along with their related answers. The idea behind the PESTE and other tools and processes is to empower school teams and their leader to recognize that they have the knowledge and agency to generate their own solutions. This activity also provides the school

team the opportunity to reflect upon their situation beyond what may seem to be immediately evident. This reflective practice is also useful for a consultant, as the following section discusses.

Questions and Challenges Emerging from the Problem of Practice

The following is a sample of a few challenges faced by the present PoP, which asks: what processes can an external change agent use to effectively support school leaders and their teams move towards professional practices that promote positive mental health.

The problem stated above has two components. The initial part of the statement addresses the sphere of influence of the consultant (i.e., which processes helps the consultant effectively support school administrators and their teams). However, an external change agent has unique leadership challenges that may impact the proposed approach to achieve the suggested objective. For example, while the main stakeholders are identified as being the school administrator and their teams, how will the consultant ensure that teams are involved in all of the processes? Who needs to be part of the team? When working at arm's length, how will the consultant communicate a sense of urgency and maintain momentum to address the issue if other contextual competing priorities should surface? As every school is unique, how does one build upon the current leadership and staff capacity to ensure an effective gap analysis occurs prior to selecting and implementing their locally relevant solutions?

The second part of the problem aims to support school administrators and their teams to ameliorate their professional practices so they can promote positive mental health. However, the reason this is difficult is because this outcome is derived from an external change agent's analysis of secondary research. In other words, it is not the targeted stakeholder group who has generated the latter part of the problem statement; therefore, some stakeholders may lack the commitment and motivation to proactively address staff and leader well-being. Furthermore, because the goal

was generated externally, school administrators and their staff may not be cognizant of the following elements: (1) what the consequences of unaddressed mental health challenges are; (2) how these issues may translate in the everyday life at their schools; and (3) how to find solutions that meets their needs.

Finally, while school leaders and their teams are fundamental stakeholders to engage with in order to enact change at the school level, because alignment is key, neglecting to also engage with school boards about the suggested priority, may limit a sustainable implementation process.

Further Lines of Inquiry Stemming From the Proposed Problem

The above-mentioned challenges fall into three broad categories: (1) sustainable implementation of relevant processes; (2) pertinent learning opportunities and resources relative to the goal to build local capacity; and (3) structures and leadership capacity *ecologically* aligned with the vision. Interestingly, these categories are congruent with the research highlighted in the *Supporting Student Mental Health* section. As such, the following questions are organized according to the above categories, and serve to further reflect upon what to prioritize in this OIP.

Implementation Supports. What are the existing structures and supports within the school that can help the process of implementation? Are these complete, or are other supports required? For example, are opinion leaders, internal change agents, champions and external change agents available (Damschroder et al., 2009)? Which processes are replicable once the consultant is no longer supporting the school? With sustainability—the firm's vision—and the PoP in mind, what are some promising processes to utilize?

Learning Opportunities and Resource Needs. The term *ameliorate* assumes that schools are building upon their strengths. As such, which learning opportunities would help support school administrators, teachers and staff towards achieving professional practices that

promote positive mental health? What is their knowledge gap? Is the need to gain buy-in or is the gap content or process related?

Alignment of Leadership and Structures with the Vision. While the focus of the PoP is to support school leaders and their teams to meet their vision, is there a way to also influence school boards to also align with this goal?

While these three challenging areas may thwart the proposed problem of practice, they are also opportunities for potential growth. As such, the following section considers what to prioritize when leading change.

Leadership-Focused Vision for Change

Why would one wish to ameliorate professional practices that promote positive mental health? Briefly, as the WHO (2004) indicated, working upstream and focusing on building resiliency skills early in life helps to circumvent many of the negative impacts highlighted by the Mental Health Commission of Canada (2013). These consequences occur in all ecological levels and affect dimensions such as lower productivity, increased turnover rates, higher absenteeism, and diminished job satisfaction (Dimoff & Kelloway, 2013; Harms et al., 2017).

As such, while Canadian school leaders and their teams are the ones directly leading and working towards their change vision, the main focus of this OIP is on the role of the external change facilitator (Cawsey et al., 2016). Specifically, which processes can the consultant utilize to help schools intentionally promote positive mental health practices? This is a vast topic with an even broader population to reach. Thus, to refine the scope of work for the purpose of this academic OIP, a few narrower priorities are defined.

Priorities for Change

The following priorities were selected based on a few parameters. First, they must be in keeping with Bronfenbrenner's (1992) *Ecological Systems Theory*, in order to consider the different dimensions that influence each school's context; and Rogers' (1961; 1980) *Humanistic Approach*, which underscores that individuals have the agency to change their situation. Second, the priorities must take into account the three broad categories identified in the *Supporting Student Mental Health* section (1) implementation supports; (2) learning opportunities and resources; and (3) aligned structures and leadership. Finally, that the priorities are within the sphere of influence of the consultant.

Given these criteria, the selected three priorities are meant to support the consultant to facilitate change. Thus, the present OIP considers: (1) simplifying the implementation processes to help move the school from its current state towards achieving its vision; (2) supporting the effective development of a diverse and driven team—or enhance an existing one—for them to actively engage in the various processes leading to a successful implementation of their selected solution; and (3) building the school's capacity so they can maintain the proposed process, once the consultant is no longer supporting the school.

To support these areas of work, which are meant to help schools successfully reach their change vision, change enablers are necessary. As such, the following section unpacks these drivers for change.

Change drivers

What is a *change driver*? According to Whelan-Berry and Somerville (2010), a change driver is defined as "events, activities, or behaviors that facilitate the implementation of change" (p. 176). In their research, these authors found five change domains across theories and seven

common drivers that enhance the efficacy of each of the change processes (see Table 3). While they found that establishing a vision was a foundational category, they did not include it in their well-defined table nor did they suggest any change drivers to enable this process (pp. 181-182). Furthermore, while the table indicates well which drivers are worth considering at each implementation stage, having employee engagement occur only in the piloting phases of the intervention seems limiting. Rather, there is value in having an *empowered team* throughout the implementation process (Leithwood, 2006; Rapp et al., 2016).

Table 3

Drivers Per Change Processes

	Drivers						
Change Processes	Accept the change vision	Leaders model the desired change	Inform	Train	Engage	Align structures & processes	Align human resource practices
Set a vision							
Move the vision from groups to individuals	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Adopt the behaviours that enable the change	X	X	X		X	X	X
Sustain the change		X	X			X	X
Entrench the new vision		X				X	X

Note. This table provides an overview of the drivers suggested according to a variety of change processes. Adapted from "Linking Change Drivers and the Organizational Change Process: A Review and Synthesis" by K. S., Whelan-Berry and K. A. Somerville, 2010, *Journal of Change Management, 10*(2), pp. 181-182.

While this table has room for improvement, it remains a valuable reminder that change is a planned process—albeit complex, iterative and non-linear. Its main purpose is to ensure that the right drivers are utilized at the appropriate juncture to maximize uptake of the proposed

change (Whelan-Berry & Somerville, 2010). Thus, the benefit of these key considerations, inform the proposed change framework, discussed in chapter 2. However, although it is important to determine which priorities to focus on and which drivers to use in the change process, are these still relevant if the school is not ready for change?

Organizational Change Readiness

According to Cawsey et al. (2016), a change facilitator's role is to support those who are responsible for implementing a new practice or program. Specifically, the consultant "identifies process and content change issues and helps resolve these, fosters support, alleviates resistance, and provides other participants with guidance and council" (p. 26). Thus, part of the external change agent's role is also to work upstream by first helping schools determine their level of readiness to meet their vision towards improving practices that promote positive mental health.

Overview of the Readiness Concept

The concept of readiness is viewed with an *Ecological* lens, where the degree of readiness may differ for individuals, teams and the organization as a whole (Scaccia et al., 2015). Thus, the idea is not to designate a school as being ready or not, but rather to determine the extent to which the school and the individuals within it are ready for change (Rogers, 2003; Scaccia et al., 2015). In which case, the school team and the consultant are able to build on the areas of strength that the school has, and work on the aspects that needs enhancing.

In general terms, when considering readiness for change, Armenakis, Harris, and Mossholder (1993) emphasize that there are two components to this concept. First the change must be perceived as necessary and second, individuals who are affected by the change must feel able to enact it. Another way to translate these two components is through a simple heuristic $R=MC^2$ (Scaccia et al., 2015), where R = readiness, M = motivation, C = general capacity and C

= innovation-specific capacity (see Table 4). While this "formula" does not cover every element influencing readiness, its purpose is to remind change agents of the need for structures, learning opportunities and resources to support implementation. However, even though these variables are essential, they become insufficient if individuals are not motivated by the change.

Table 4

Subcomponents of the Organizational Readiness Heuristic: $R=MC^2$

Components That Supports Readiness (R)	Readiness Subcomponents
Influences on Motivation (M)	Relative advantage of the intervention; Compatibility; Complexity; Trialability; Observability and Priority.
General Capacity (C) (non-exhaustive)	Culture; Climate; Organizational innovativeness; Resources; Leadership; Structure and Staff capacity.
Innovation-Specific Capacity (C) (non-exhaustive)	Innovation-specific knowledge, skills, and abilities; Program champion; Specific implementation climate supports and Interorganizational relationships.

Note. The above subcomponents related to the organizational readiness heuristic components are elements to consider when an organization, or in the case of a school, wishes to implement change to address the gap between their current state and their vision. Adapted from "A Practical Implementation Science Heuristic for Organizational Readiness: $R = MC^2$: A Heuristic for Organizational Readiness" by J. P. Scaccia, B. S. Cook, A. Lamont, A. Wandersman, J. Castellow, J. Katz, and R. S. Beidas, 2015, *Journal of Community Psychology*, *43*(4), pp. 487–488.

The elements pertaining to the *Influences on Motivation* found in Table 4 speak to the qualities of the proposed intervention/solution (Damschroder et al., 2009; Rogers, 2003). However, there are other variables and drivers that can affect motivation. For example, when organizations offer employees the opportunities and skills to lead change, they have a greater sense of self-efficacy, which impacts their readiness to participate in other change initiatives (Cunningham et al., 2002; Leithwood, 2006). In addition, Drzensky, Egold, and van Dick's (2012) research highlights that when employees have a high degree of organizational identification (i.e., where the individual defines themselves as having similar values and beliefs as their organization), they have a higher level of change readiness. However, if the proposed

change is not aligned with the culture of the organization, individuals are more resistant. This is also true if they do not feel they have the ability to cope with the change. By being aware of these aspects, it is suggested to ensure that the proposed solutions "fit" within the culture and context of the school. Furthermore, the authors suggest creating a supportive environment—similar to Heifetz's (1994) holding environment—and regularly communicating with staff throughout the change process to diminish any perceived ambiguity (Drzensky, et al., 2012).

Another enabler for change readiness occurs when the targeted users of an intervention are part of the development stage, thus permitting them to contribute their input (Greenhalgh et al., 2004), which may help ensure that proposed solution "fits" in the school's context from the outset. This strategy is similar to the saying "*nothing about me, without me"*. This suggests that a team-based approach from the start has value (Fixsen et al., 2005; Rapp et al., 2016).

Readiness and the PoP

To support schools in determining their degree of readiness towards addressing the change vision of ameliorating their positive mental health practices, the consultant works with the school administrator and their dedicated team. Because of the nature of the consultant's role, the school leader would most likely initiate the first contact. Following which, the working terms would be discussed and agreed upon, such as how they meet (i.e., in-person, virtually or a combination of both) and an explanation of roles, responsibilities, expectations and other parameters. One of these expectations is to have the school leader and their team complete the *Initial Readiness Assessment Tool* (Appendix D), based upon Wandersman and Scaccia's (2018) *The Readiness Assessment Worksheet*®. The purpose of this activity is to determine the level of readiness of the school team and leader as a group and to inform next steps based on their areas of needs and strengths.

In keeping with the proposed tool completion process, the consultant would send out these questions to the leader and their team members through an online platform hosted on a Canadian server that would not collect any identifying data (Cohen et al., 2011). A preamble would explain: (1) the purpose of the tool (i.e., determine to which degree they perceive themselves, their team and their school to be ready to achieve their aspirational vision); (2) the measures taken to keep the information confidential (i.e., aggregated data) and safely stored (i.e., Canadian servers and password protected); (3) the intent to have all team members complete the tool (i.e., to help gain a broader understanding of the team's perceived level of readiness); (4) how the information is reported back (i.e., decide the share-back sequence with the school team); (5) how it is used (i.e., determine next steps); and finally (6) the need for informed consent prior to completing the tool.

Again, the purpose of defining the level of readiness is not to determine whether or not a school can proceed towards meeting their vision, but rather it is meant to gather insights on their strengths and the barriers they face. The visual representation of this (Appendix E), while helpful, does not provide the story behind the numbers. Thus, a mixed method approach (Cohen et al., 2011) where optional text boxes are added to the questions in Appendix D, to allow participants to contextualize their responses. This cumulative and de-identified information helps the consultant and the school team select the areas they wish to prioritize.

While a readiness assessment aims to denote where a school situates themselves relative to a change initiative and highlights which areas to prioritize to enhance a team's motivation, this process is insufficient to achieve the PoP under investigation.

Chapter Conclusion

In this first chapter, a small Canadian consulting firm was introduced, and the unique opportunities and challenges faced by an external change agent who supports change at arm's length were discussed. Additionally, the concepts of mental health challenges, their broad societal consequences and the importance of preventative work to address these concerns, all of which are issues identified by the World Health Organization (2004), were unpacked. The WHO (2004) further suggests targeting preventative interventions in the work environment as a means to promote job satisfaction and decrease the adverse consequences of mental health challenges. As such, the PoP under investigation explores which processes can an external change agent use to proactively and effectively support school leaders and their teams to move towards professional practices that promote positive mental health?

In the subsequent chapters of this OIP, the processes presented address the three areas of concern: implementation supports, learning opportunities and resources needs, and alignment between leadership, structure and vision. To summarize, this chapter established the knowledge foundation and set the priorities that inform the latter part of this document. As such, chapter 2 expands on that foundation, delving deeper into some proposed change processes and targeted solutions that are within the consultant's sphere of influence.

Chapter 2 – Positive Mental Health Promoting Processes

Chapter 1 set the stage for this OIP by introducing certain conditions that are necessary to address positive mental health in the work place. These conditions included factors such as engaging stakeholders in a change initiative (Rapp et al., 2016; Whelan-Berry & Somerville, 2010) through lateral activities (Bolman & Deal, 2013; Kotter, 1996); ensuring there is team and leader readiness and commitment towards the change vision; providing the opportunity for team members to contribute to the decision-making process; favouring small teams; and developing a high-quality communication process within the school (Dimoff & Kelloway, 2013; Kuoppala et al., 2008; Leithwood, 2006; Roffey, 2012). In addition to these elements, to be effective, solutions towards addressing the PoP, are considered through an ecological lens, particularly at the individual and organizational levels (Acton & Glasgow, 2015; Prilleltensky, 2005).

Thus, this section considers how to incorporate the above-mentioned variables in a solution that meets the aim of the firm (i.e., building client's capacity to implement change in an ongoing manner); focus on the PoP (i.e., which processes can an external change agent use to effectively support school leaders and their teams towards adopting professional practices that promote positive mental health); and be within the sphere of control of the consultant.

Leadership Approaches to Change

Leading change at arm's length is somewhat of a paradox. While being a key contributor in the change process (Damschroder et al., 2009), an external change agent leads through influence, not through the direct application of their clients identified solutions. Thus, the consultant's leadership occurs by being: (a) a catalyst for change—ignites their clients interest in addressing positive mental health practices; (b) an enabler—supports clients to assess, plan and enact their unique change process (Fixsen et al., 2005); (c) a critical friend—through strong

professional and authentic relationships, the consultant supports clients to take a step back to view the big picture (Fortier, Lalonde, Venesoen, Legwegoh, & Short, 2017), and (d) an accountability partner—helps clients to set realistic goals and meet their objectives. These four different roles are meant to help the consultant influence change and these roles are achieved by intentionally focusing on developing and maintaining authentic relationships as highlighted in the *ALT Leadership Model.*

Relationships Matter

The purpose of fostering authentic relationships is to enhance trust, which increases confidence, cooperation and commitment toward the change process (Choi, Kang, & Lee, 2008; Cleveland & Ellis, 2015; Mei, Lee, & Al-Hawamdeh, 2004; Rockmann & Northcraft, 2008). To promote such a foundational rapport, it is essential to: create a safe holding environment, be empathetic, actively listen, and prompt for answers rather than providing them (Bluckert, 2005; de Haan, Culpin, & Curd, 2011; Heifetz, 1994; Hettema et al., 2014). However, certain obstacles may hinder these important partnerships. In addition to the flipside of the above-mentioned strategies, barriers can include: a lack of trust, communication challenges (i.e., having a poor plan and/or skills), and environmental constraints, such as lack of time, resources and supports (Cleveland & Ellis, 2015; Hughes, 2008).

As such, since a consultant leads change through influence, positive relationships with clients are essential (Bluckert, 2005; Bozer, Joo, & Santora, 2015; de Haan et al., 2011). The following section means to unpack this process as proposed in Appendix A.

Practical Process

The processes and activities proposed in Appendix A are meant to support an individual to apply the *ALT Leadership Model*. As such, reflection questions are suggested to support the

consultant in pondering key elements per "area of focus" within each component of the *ALT Leadership Model*. In addition, as Bronfenbrenner (1992) suggests, individuals are not passive recipients of their interactions or environment. Therefore, the proposed activities and questions may produce different outcomes according to participants, their dynamics and their contexts.

While leadership occurs in a variety of settings, the following example is staged within the context of a meeting between a consultant and the school team. Prior to this meeting, the model suggests to begin at the base of the pyramid (see Figure 2), where the *Authentic Leadership* section is considered as a preparatory stage, where the focus is to prompt self-reflection and self-awareness. This is achieved through monitoring behaviours and intentions, in order to be genuine to oneself and others (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Rogers, 1961, 1980).

Following which, the *LMX* section considers elements such as: developing a holding environment (Heifetz, 1994)—where individuals understand the purpose of the meeting and agree to actively participate (Bronfenbrenner, 1992; Rogers, 1961, 1980); ensuring that the communication skills and plan are on point—to be further developed in chapter 3; adopting an empathetic stance (Rogers, 2003); listening intently and ensuring others are being heard; and, asking prompting questions rather than generating solutions for others (Bluckert, 2005; de Haan et al., 2011; Hettema et al., 2014). When facilitating this section, there is an important overlap with Heifetz (1994) *Adaptive Leadership* principles, where participants have a voice, stay on task and stakeholders enhance their capacity to find their own solutions.

An example of intentionally establishing a rapport between the consultant and the participants, as suggested in the *LMX* section, is to briefly have an informal discussion about a variety of themes (e.g., How did participants choose to work their field? Do they have previous knowledge or experiences with the suggested vision?). The purpose of this activity is to find

commonalities between participants as this would help accelerate the establishment of their relationships (Bass, 2008). Furthermore, the activity of uncovering similarities between the consultant and the school team promotes a better communication within the dyad (Rogers, 2003). This aids individuals to further understand each other, thereby promoting trust (Wenger, McDermott & Snyder, 2002), which is a key element within all three components of the *ALT Leadership Model*.

In addition, as suggested by Rogers (2003), adopting an empathetic stance as a change agent is important. Empathy implies being able to put oneself in another person's situation. To do so, Rogers (2003) suggests to: listen to the other, establish eye contact, smile and create a rapport. By truly listening and being empathetic the consultant gains a deeper understanding of the situation, rather than making assumptions about their client's context. To this point, Cawsey et al. (2016) remind external change agents that being outside of the organization provides only a limited understanding of its internal functioning. The authors add that providing prefabricated solutions to a third party is not a responsible practice. Rather, the external change agent can support a sustainable process and stimulate the motivation of clients when prompting them to answer questions and creatively think about their own answers (Cleveland & Ellis, 2015; Heifetz, 1994; Hughes, 2008).

Lastly, the *Transformational Leadership* (Bass, 2008) section unpacks the 4 I's, which are: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration. The activities and prompting questions in Appendix A leading up to this section are relational building blocks towards the application of *Transformational Leadership*. For example, the activity of finding commonalities, such as interests or activities, between consultant and client may be viewed as foundational work towards individualized consideration.

Since a consultant leads at arm's length, the main tool at their disposal is solid relationships. Thus, the purpose of the detailed process in Appendix A is to bring awareness key elements that may help a consultant build rapport to authentically enhance their clients' trust, commitment and collaboration within the dyadic professional relationship. This, in turn, allows for a transformative approach to support school leaders and their team to achieve their vision. In other words, developing positive relationships is a foundational process for a change agent to influence change, which directly correlates to the PoP under investigation.

While the *ALT Leadership Model's* process helps to determine *how to* lead change indirectly, a critical element remains to be explored: which change framework to adopt.

Framework for Leading the Change Process: How to Change

The purpose of the consultant, as per the firm's vision, is to facilitate change by building client's local capacity to sustainably address their contextual issues. To achieve this optimally, stakeholders learn and take ownership of a change process that is then applied in an ongoing manner. As such, proposing a common framework helps facilitate the communication process by establishing a shared language, understanding and direction for everyone involved, which is a core condition towards enhanced teacher job satisfaction (Leithwood, 2006). Thus, no matter a participant's background, knowledge or role, a common framework prevents communication barriers between individuals taking part in the change process. This explicit translation of information is essential when people come from different fields (Manojlovich, Squires, Davies, & Graham, 2015), such as mental health and education.

Fortunately, many frameworks exist, such as Kotter's (1996) *Eight-Stage Process* and Cawsey et al.'s (2016) *Change Path Model*. In addition, Whelan-Berry and Summerville's (2010) review synthesized many of these frameworks to uncover some of their common

elements. In Table 5, the components of these frameworks were listed then paired into sections that were similar to one another. The common elements between these frameworks: (1) identified a vision; (2) engaged various stakeholders; (3) prepared a plan that was enacted and assessed; and (4) worked to incorporate this new learning into the fabric of the organization.

Table 5

Comparison of a Few Change Frameworks

<table>
<tr><th>Eight-Stage Process
(Kotter, 1996)</th><th>Change Path Model
(Cawsey et al., 2016)</th><th>Synthesized Review
(Whelan-Berry &
Summerville, 2010)</th><th>Common
Elements</th></tr>
<tr><td>Establish a sense of urgency</td><td>Awakening</td><td>Set an aspirational vision</td><td>Identify a vision</td></tr>
<tr><td>Create a guiding coalition</td><td rowspan="3">Mobilization</td><td>Move the vision from groups to individuals</td><td rowspan="3">Engage stakeholders</td></tr>
<tr><td>Develop a vision and a strategy</td><td rowspan="3">Adopt the behaviours that enable the change</td></tr>
<tr><td>Communicate</td></tr>
<tr><td>Empower employees</td><td rowspan="3">Acceleration</td><td rowspan="3">Plan, apply and review</td></tr>
<tr><td>Generate short term wins</td></tr>
<tr><td>Consolidate gains and produce more change</td><td>Sustain the change</td></tr>
<tr><td>Anchor new approaches</td><td>Institutionalization</td><td>Entrench the new vision</td><td>Sustain</td></tr>
</table>

Note. The purpose of this table is to demonstrate that, despite the variety of frameworks available, essentially, they have a common process. For example, they start with a vision, which is widely shared to engage stakeholders, the plan is developed and put into practice, and then there is a reassessment of the process. The objective is to sustain the practice and strive towards additional change through another cycle. Adapted from "Leading Change" by J.P. Kotter, 1996, Boston MA: Harvard Business School Press, (p. 23); "Organizational Change: An Action-Oriented Toolkit" by T.F. Cawsey, G. Deszca and C. Ingols, 2016, Los Angeles: Sage, p. 55; and "Linking Change Drivers and the Organizational Change Process: A Review and Synthesis" by K. S., Whelan-Berry and K. A. Somerville, 2010, *Journal of Change Management*, *10*(2), pp. 181-182.

While the frameworks in the first three columns in Table 5 are well known, a new change framework is proposed to align with the previously identified priorities meant to help the consultant influence change. Thus, in addition to the common elements identified in the forth column in Table 5, the new framework proposes to (1) simplify the implementation processes;

(2) support local teams to actively engage in the various processes towards leading change; and (3) build a school's capacity to sustain their change efforts. Specifically, the proposed framework is meant to be simple (i.e., easy to remember for users), flexible (i.e., can fit within any context), and familiar (i.e., known by the school leader and their team). Furthermore, the change framework includes the core conditions identified in chapter 1, such as engaging small committed teams in the decision-making and solution generating processes (Dimoff & Kelloway, 2013; Kuoppala et al., 2008; Leithwood, 2006; Roffey, 2012). Finally, the new model is congruent with the *ALT Leadership Model*.

With these criteria in mind, key components from a few selected frameworks helped inform the new change model. These were: *Action Research* (Cohen et al., 2011), *Plan-Do-Study-Act* [PDSA] cycle (Langley et al., 2009) and the *Adaptive Leadership* holding environment (Heifetz, 1994). The combination of these theories (Riel & Martin, 2017) shaped the proposed *Action-Driven Change Framework* (Figure 5).

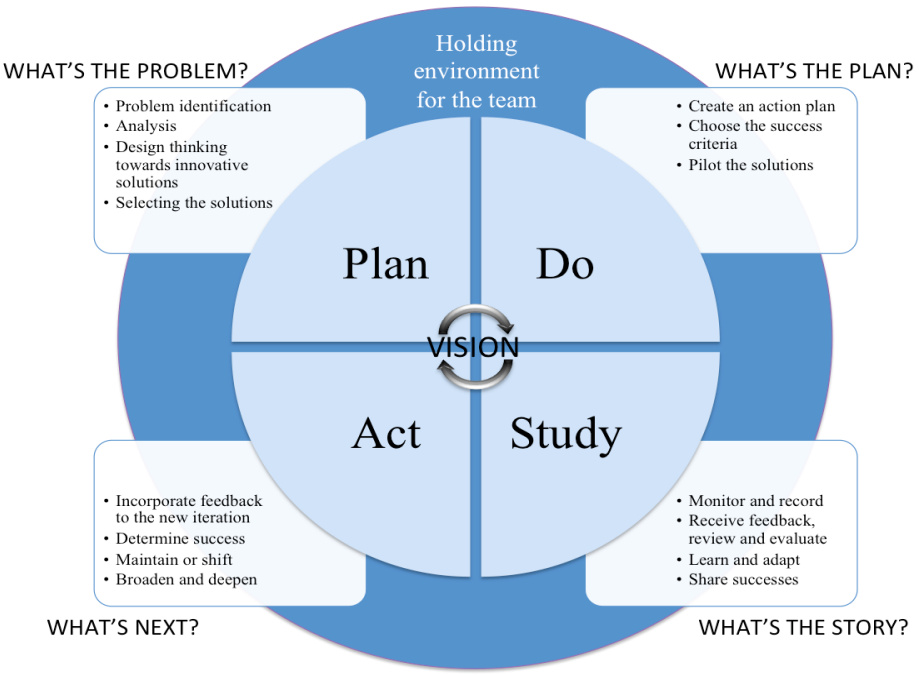

Figure 5. The Action-Driven Change Framework.

Conceptually the interaction between the selected frameworks is as follows. The outer circle represents the adaptive leadership theory, where the leader's behaviour promotes a favourable environment to help enact change. To do so, the leader creates a safe holding environment and builds solid relationship as the *ALT Leadership Model* suggests (Appendix A). Central to the image and the process is the *vision,* which acts as the anchor to all the change-related activities (Miller & Rollnick, 2013). The arrows surrounding the *vision* suggest that this process is cyclical and iterative. The inner blue circle is the *Plan-Do-Study-Act* cycle (Langley et al., 2009), and the connected boxes, with the exception of *Act,* are components of the *Action Research* framework (Cohen et al., 2011).

The *Action Research* framework and the PDSA cycle are very compatible models, yet they have subtle differences that enhance one another, which is why they were selected. The PDSA cycle, for instance, is simple to understand and use, while the *Action Research* model is already applied in schools (Cohen et al., 2011). By incorporating the latter approach, the consultant proposes to school leaders and their team a change framework that is familiar within the education system, thus encouraging a common language and understanding (Leithwood, 2006; Manojlovich et al., 2015). Additionally, to further simplify and demystify the change process, each quadrant of the *Action-Driven Change Framework* proposes a question: "What's the problem?" "What's the plan?" "What's the story?" and "What's next?"

Within each of these sections, change drivers that support change are included. To demonstrate this, Table 6 revisits Table 3 by adapting the initial table to align with the *Action-Driven Change Framework.* For instance, the first column was renamed "Anchor the change vision" in order to highlight the purpose of the vision throughout the change process. Because of its function, all rows are now marked with an "X". The rationale is that while a group is problem

identifying, planning, enacting and considering next steps, participants are asked to always think about why they are doing this process. Additionally, communicating with a variety of stakeholders is a fluid and ongoing process. While the purpose or the messaging may vary (Bowen & Graham, 2013; Kitson & Straus, 2013; Ward et al., 2012), communication remains an essential component for leading change, which is why an "X" was added to each row. This is also the case for the "Engage" column. As previously discussed in the *ALT Leadership Model*, relationships are foundational for an external change agent to influence change, thus, to help gain and maintain momentum and commitment, "engagement" is an element requiring ongoing attention. Finally, as learning opportunities are continual, the *Action-Driven Change Framework* proposes to incorporate processes that promote this priority throughout a change cycle.

Table 6

Action-Driven Change Framework and its Related Drivers

	Drivers						
Change Processes	Anchor the change vision	Leaders model the desired change	Communicate	Learn	Engage (ALT model)	Align structures & processes	Align human resource practices
Vision	X						
What's the Problem?	X	X	X	X	X	X	
What's the Plan?	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
What's the Story?	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
What's Next?	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Note. This table revisits the drivers proposed by Whelan-Berry and Summerville (2010) as they would align with the *Action-Driven Change Framework.* The new additions and modifications made by the present author are included in red. Adapted from "Linking Change Drivers and the Organizational Change Process: A Review and Synthesis" by K. S., Whelan-Berry and K. A. Somerville, 2010, *Journal of Change Management*, *10*(2), pp. 181-182.

The *Action-Driven Change Framework* was developed to be familiar within the education system and to reinforce the conditions that enhance job satisfaction (Leithwood, 2006). Now, however, it is important to consider how to integrate this process for it to become a

sustainable practice for school leaders and their teams in order to support them to achieve the vision of promoting professional practices that promote positive mental health.

The Action-Driven Change Framework: A Model to Cascade

Achieving sustainability is an objective for various authors, even if they propose different terms to describe it, such as "anchor new approaches" (Kotter, 1996), "institutionalization" (Cawsey et al., 2016) and "entrench the new vision" (Whelan-Berry & Summerville, 2010). The firm also has this goal in mind, as consultants are only temporary in a change process. Thus, to support the consultant in this endeavour, the *Learning Cascade* (Figure 6) process is favoured as it serves the dual function of directly supporting change and building local capacity to use the framework once the consultant is no longer there. Specifically, the model offers four opportunities to learn about a specific topic. First, individuals learn when they are taught the model, second, when they put this knowledge into practice, third, when they teach it to others, and lastly, when they observe and support others while they apply the change model in question.

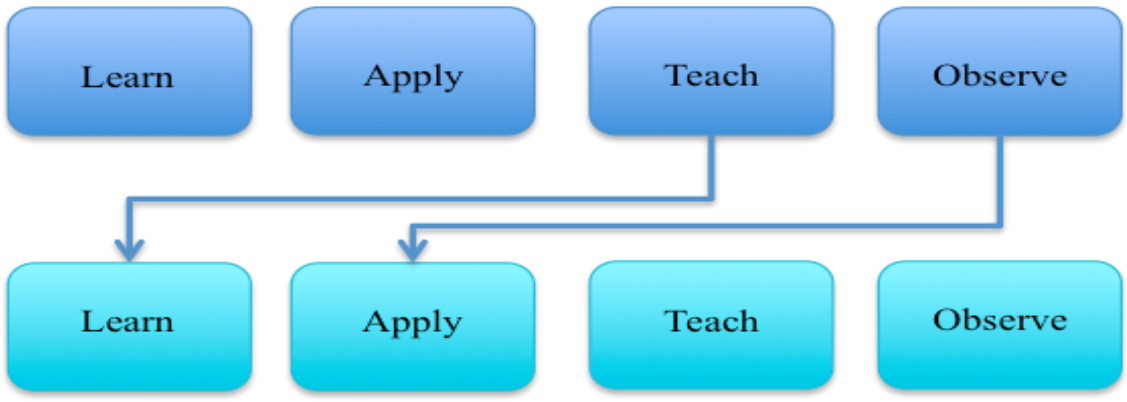

Figure 6. The Learning Cascade. Adapted from "Diagnosing and Changing Organizational Culture: Based on the Competing Values Framework" by K.S. Cameron and R.E. Quinn, 2011, San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, p. 119.

Concretely, the consultant teaches school leaders and their teams about the *Action-Driven Change Framework.* Following which the external change agent supports them while they apply the process. Afterwards, since it is suggested to "start small" by both *Action Research* and *PDSA* (Cohen et al., 2011; Langley et al., 2009), school leaders and their teams have the opportunity to

teach others when their change activities broaden to a wider audience. Finally, observing other team members as they apply this framework helps the individual learn vicariously.

Now that the leadership model, change framework and learning cascade have been developed to align with the role of the consultant within the education system, and discussed, the next step considers the analysis process meant to address the PoP.

Critical Organizational Analysis: What to Change

Examining each school within a large Canadian province may reveal how different they are from one another. For instance, while a PESTE analysis (Appendix B and C) may highlight common factors, such as having federal and provincial political parties who both prioritize mental health, it may also uncover a number of factors that make each school different. For example, schools can be situated in a remote, rural or an urban setting, where available resources and community partners differ. In addition, a school's size, history, leadership, staffing, students and families, as well as their interactions with each other, also create a mix that makes them unique (Bronfenbrenner, 1992). Because of this variability, the consultant does not offer a set of packaged solutions (Cawsey et al., 2016), but rather, they aid the school shape their gap analysis as it pertains to their vision, and then offer support to achieve their identified solutions.

As such, since each school varies, a "one size fits all" solution that aims to promote positive mental health does not exist. Thus, the ongoing focus remains to propose processes that support a school leader and their team to achieve this objective.

Walking the Talk: Analyzing What to Change

As Whelan-Berry and Summerville (2010) highlight in their review, a key driver that promotes change occurs when a leader models the desired change in a congruent and ongoing way. Thus, in accordance with the *Learning Cascade*, the consultant, who initially learned about

the tools, processes and framework that are proposed to school leaders and their team, through their development, applies these to help generate potential solutions towards addressing the PoP. This process is known as *Journey Mapping* (Liedtka & Ogilvie, 2011), which proposes walking in another person's shoes, to gain a tangible perspective on their experience and to develop genuine empathy for its user (Rogers, 1961, 1980). The analysis, therefore, starts with the "What's the Problem?" quadrant of the *Action-Driven Change Framework* (Figure 7) and situates the process that occurs between the consultant and a school, which is fictitious for the purpose of this OIP.

Vision. In the "What's the Problem?" section, a team and their leader are asked to identify the problem they are striving to address and to review their ecological context and data prior to generating solutions. However, the first step towards analyzing what to change is to anchor the work in their *vision*, which, in the case of the consultant is to: "support organizations to sustainably move from knowing about an issue to acting upon it" (The firm, 2018). When layering this to the PoP, the vision becomes: "the consultant aids the school leader and their team to sustainably move from knowing about the importance of promoting positive professional mental health practices at school, to acting upon it".

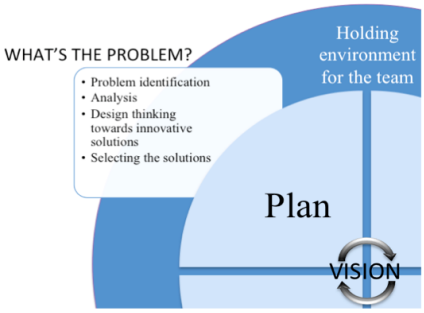

Figure 7. Action-Driven Change Framework: What's the Problem?

Problem Identification Process: Fictitious School. The next activity in the process is meant to identify problems that are creating barriers towards achieving the vision. Some of these barriers, enumerated in *Framing the Problem of Practice* in chapter 1, include time crunches and scheduling (Higgins et al., 2008), stress related to increased workload (Koenig et al., 2017; Falecki, 2015; Pollock et al., 2014) and feelings of powerlessness (Falecki, 2015). But what do

these obstacles look like? What problems do they cause? A hypothetical example related to increased workload might be: The additional administrative demands placed upon school leaders and teachers are affecting their stress levels, which is impacting their performance, their attitude and their students' learning.

Once the team has selected a targeted problem, they list 20 ideas of what might be causing this issue (Bernhardt, 2018). The purpose of this activity is to consider the potential stories that may be hidden behind an issue, thus contributing to building empathy towards those who may be living with or impacted by the problem. However, while brainstorming ideas is a commonly used practice, Ritchie (2013) cautions to follow this activity with research and implementation planning. Otherwise, if a team directly jumps to "fixing the problem", they risk duplicating efforts, taking more time than needed and even failing in their efforts.

After the list is generated, the school leader and their team do an ecological PESTE analysis (Appendix B & C) to take a step back from the situation and identify certain elements that either exacerbates the problem or favourably influences its outcome. The data to inform this process can be drawn from: demographics, perception, student learning, school processes (Bernhardt, 2018), as well as from gray literature or academic sources. When completing the ecological PESTE analysis, the expectation is not to fill each "box" with information, but rather, it is to ensure that the team views the situation through many ecological layers (Bronfenbrenner, 1992) in order to identify what might be contributing to the problem.

Problem Identification Process. In chapter 1, the culmination of the information gathered and analyzed generated additional lines of inquiry that fell into the following three broad categories: (1) simple and sustainable implementation processes (2) learning opportunities and resources aligned with the vision, and (3) congruent structures and leadership. While

questions were identified in each of these clusters, one potential problem within each of these was prioritized, specifically:

(1) As schools have many different priorities to attend to daily, which can limit the time and resources available to dedicate towards an implementation process, how can a consultant simplify this procedure to allow for uptake?

(2) In some cases, school leaders hire an external change agent so they can delegate a change initiative to them. However, once the consultant leaves, the school leader and their team do not continue the work that was started. How can the consultant help promote the uptake of the change process as a sustainable practice?

(3) The process proposed by the external change agent assumes that the school leader and a team actively participate in the change initiative. However, what happens if the school leader does not have a team to aid them? How can the consultant support the school leader to recognize the importance of a team and help them establish one?

For the hypothetical brainstorming activity, which is discussed in the *solutions* section, the targeted issue is the second option. However, this selection is fraught with challenges, as the lack of uptake of the change process by the school would occur only after the consultant had completed their mandate. Thus, any solutions to address the problem are preventative in nature. In addition, this concern is not the focus of the work that a school hired the consultant for; therefore, if they were to address this issue—that has not yet happened—it would shift the attention away from the school's vision (Heifetz, 1994). Nonetheless, since commitment is a key driver that supports the implementation process (Damschroder et al., 2009), there is value in addressing this area of concern.

In practice, the list generated through a brainstorming session is co-created between the consultant and a focus group, comprised of school leaders and teachers. The purpose of this group is to avoid adding to the school's full schedule. However, since this OIP does not collect primary data, the content presented in Table 7 is fictitious and meant as a theoretical exercise.

Table 7

Hypothetical Brainstormed List Related to the Lack of Uptake of the Change Process

1. An implementation team worked with the consultant, but without leadership commitment, time, resources and supports, the change initiative practices were not maintained.	2. There are multiple initiatives underway at school, but they do not have a common framework, therefore, the school leader and their team perceive the process to be too complex to apply without support.
3. The change initiative was mandated. Little or no consultation was done.	4. Promoting positive mental health practices is not a priority for the school.
5. There is no time to implement change.	6. The change framework is too complex.
7. There is a lack of commitment towards the topic by the school leader.	8. The school board does not have funds or release time for an implementation process.
9. The school leader values the topic, but has too many priorities to focus on.	10. The initiative is viewed as a "one-off". Therefore, investing one's time is a waste.
11. There is incongruence between what the school leader says they value and their actions.	12. Leader is struggling, and has delegated the work as they feel it is important, but cannot attend to it at this time.
13. Staff and leader feel overwhelmed and perceive the initiative to be an add-on.	14. High interpersonal conflicts at school, which limits the desire to address the topic directly.
15. Leader feels that they do not need to take ownership, as they believe the issue will be resolved once the consultant has completed their mandate.	16. The belief is that addressing mental distress is to refer to a mental health professional. The notion of prevention is not valued. Therefore, an ongoing process does not make sense.
17. There is some conflict between the leader and a few staff members; therefore, they prefer to let a third party lead the initiative.	18. The holding environment established by the consultant does not invite trust or initiative.
19. It is "how it is done at this school" i.e., hiring a consultant to do the work.	20. The belief is that the initiative will fail. Thus, it is better for a consultant to take the blame.

Note. The 20 items are related to the topic of: *lack of uptake of the change initiative by the school leader and their teams*. Following the exercise, topics were put in blue to help analyze the data. This activity is adapted from "Data analysis for continuous school improvement" 4th ed., by V. L. Bernhardt, 2018, New York, NY: Routledge, p. 106.

As a facilitator of the brainstorming activity, the consultant is aware of conversations and is attuned to the fact that some ideas might be triggering for certain participants. As the goal is not to add or create discord within a school, the consultant, as an *Adaptive Leader*, sets clear parameters for the activity. These may include guidelines such as: keep the topic front and centre, focus statements on the issue not on an individual, and define the suggestions as general causes to the problem. Remember the purpose of the activity: to build empathy through the possible stories behind the issue (Heifetz, 1994; Rogers, 1961, 1980).

Following the activity, each statement's theme is accentuated in blue. The common topics were: structures and supports that are not favourable to the change initiative (1, 5, 8, 13, 18); no commitment towards the change initiative (1, 3, 7, 11); the initiative is not a priority (4, 9, 16); beliefs of individuals and/or the culture of the school is not favourable towards the topic (16, 19, 20); internal conflicts/dynamics prompt leadership to delegate the change initiative (14, 17); the problem is viewed as simple and can be resolved by the consultant (10, 15); a perception that the process is too complex (2, 6); and finally, that the leader and/or team members are themselves struggling with mental health concerns (12, 13).

Afterwards, the clustered themes were mapped onto the CFIR's domains and constructs (Damschroder et al., 2009). The purpose of this process is to determine if the issues align with the literature, as Ritchie (2013) suggests. The CFIR framework was selected as it builds upon the review of 19 theories. Thus, if the topic areas stemming from the brainstorming exercise are congruent with the elements within the CFIR, it is plausible to consider that these themes are indeed potential areas of concern according to the literature (Table 8).

Table 8

Brainstormed Themes and their Related CFIR Domains and Constructs

Domains	Related Constructs	Brainstormed Themes (Table 7)
Outer Setting	External policies and incentives	Mandated by another ecological level (3)
Inner Setting	Culture	Beliefs of individuals and/or the culture of the school is not favourable towards the topic (16, 19, 20)
	Networks and Communication	Internal conflicts/dynamics (14, 17)
Implementation Climate	Relative priority	The initiative is not a priority (4, 9, 16)
Readiness for Implementation	Leadership engagement	No commitment towards the change initiative (1, 3, 7, 11)
	Available resources	Structures and supports that are not favourable to the change initiative (1, 5, 8, 13, 18)
Characteristics of Individuals	Knowledge and beliefs about the intervention	The problem is viewed as simple and will be resolved by the consultant (10, 15)
	Self-efficacy	Leader and/or team members are struggling with mental health challenges (12, 13)
Intervention Characteristics	Complexity	A perception that the process is too complex (2, 6)
Implementation Processes	Engaging	The holding environment established by the consultant does not invite trust or initiative (18)

Note. The themes generated were aligned with their relevant CFIR dimensions and constructs. Not all constructs appear in this Table. For a full list, see Table 1. Adapted from "Fostering Implementation of Health Services Research Findings into Practice: A Consolidated Framework for Advancing Implementation Science" by L. J. Damschroder, D. C. Aron, R. E. Keith, S. R. Kirsh, J. A. Alexander and J. C. Lowery, 2009, *Implementation Science, 4*(1), pp. 50-65.

This activity is designed to help participants notice potential causes of an identified problem and to start noticing possible narratives behind an issue. These stories can help the group develop empathy towards the situation, which is a key component of the solution generating process (Brown, 2009; Kelley & Littman, 2001). In addition, layering this reflective activity to the literature also adds legitimacy to the hypothetical concerns. However, this process is not sufficient to start considering solutions, which is why conducting a PESTE analysis is key.

The PESTE into Practice. To understand the enablers and barriers within one's environment, an ecological PESTE analysis is helpful (Appendix B & C). In practice, the consultant supports the school leader and their team to complete the information with the data that they have available (Bernhardt, 2018). However, in this scenario, the PESTE analysis becomes a tool to further understand the context in which the consultant's identified problem may occur. With a focus group of key stakeholders, the consultant first asks participants to think about their school environment as it relates to the problem and the list of hypotheses they generated. Then the group completes a PESTE, following which a discussion about where they believe the enablers and barriers are situated within their specific contexts. To conceptualize this, a fictitious example is provided in Table 9.

Table 9

Ecological PESTE Analysis: An Example of a Fictitious School

Vision:	Striving towards professional practices that promote positive mental health at school.	
Identified Problem:	There is a lack of uptake of the change process by the school leader and their team.	
PESTE Dimensions	Strengths	Barriers/Challenges
Political	Currently both the Federal and Provincial governments support mental health.	While the school board receives funding, senior leaders, and other individuals within the board do not believe that it is within their mandate to address this topic in schools.
	Unions are also supportive of this topic.	
Economical	Because of the government's support, funding and resources are available to the education sector.	There is funding, but it does not align with the vision of prevention.
		The school is in a remote area, where there is a lower enrolment of students, which affects the funding.
		The primary industry in the area is closing.
		There is a high rate of poverty in the region.

Social	Teachers are very receptive to addressing the topic of positive mental health.	Many teachers work in isolation from their peers.
	The leader is new to the school, and has already developed a trusting relationship with their team.	
Technological	Funding allowed for new computers to be purchased for teachers, which helps the workload of teachers.	Technology, such as cellular phones and emails, has increased the workload of principals and teachers, as they are *always* available.
Environmental	The region is beautiful and attracts many tourists during the summer.	Winters are harsh and there are often "snow days" where the leader, staff and students cannot reach the school.

Note. The above is a non-exhaustive example of an ecological PESTE analysis of a fictitious school. Items come from various sources. As this is only hypothetical, no sources were included here. Adapted from: "Organizational change: An action-oriented toolkit" by T.P. Cawsey, G. Deszca, and C. Ingols, 2016, Los Angeles: SAGE.

Connecting the Dots. When reviewing the examples provided in Table 9, a few hypotheses were validated, and others refuted. For example, the political environment is favourable about the topic of mental health, and funding is provided to the education sector (i.e., the *outer setting)*. However, while this is a macrosytem priority, at the mesosytem and microsystem levels, this priority can fluctuate, depending on the values and beliefs of stakeholders. This influences the *implementation readiness* dimension of the CFIR. For instance, certain senior leaders and staff seem to disagree with the focus of preventing mental health in school, whereas, teachers and their unions have expressed support with this focal point. Furthermore, it is unclear how the leader of this fictitious school positions themselves on the topic, therefore the level of commitment towards addressing mental health at school is undetermined. The *inner setting* is a notable area of strength as the leader is viewed favourably within the school. Other variables also act as potential barriers, such as poverty, work intensification (Pollock, 2016), and individuals' coping behaviours (i.e., *outer setting* and *characteristics of individuals*). These contextual elements help inform what might be hindering

the uptake of the proposed change framework. It also helps the consultant reflect upon what might be proactively done to bolster the motivation and commitment of school leaders and their team, to ensure this practice is adopted beyond the consultant's established mandate.

However, what if the issue originates from the *implementation process* dimension? While the PESTE analysis did not cover this element, Bronfenbrenner (1992) and Rogers (1961, 1980) suggest that individuals both influence their environment and are influenced by it. Therefore, it is plausible that: (1) the consultant's change framework is viewed as too complex; (2) in practice, the consultant's leadership approach does not focus sufficiently on building relationships—*ALT Leadership Model*; and/or (3) the external change agent is not effective in establishing a safe holding environment. Any one of these scenarios could thwart the uptake of the practice. Thus, being attentive to these elements in the solution generating section is important. But before considering any potential solutions, according to Heifetz (1994), the leader and their team must first assess what type of issue is being examined.

What Type of Problem is it? Why does one need to assess if an issue is technical, technical-adaptive or adaptive (as defined in Table 2)? Essentially, knowing the type of problem being addressed helps those involved to define their problem, find relevant solutions and determine who holds the responsibility to enact the solution. Categorizing the issue by type has an additional benefit: when a problem is identified as being adaptive in nature, it alerts stakeholders to the complexity of the issue and the potential challenge of defining or solving the problem. This acknowledgment also helps to manage expectations of those involved in the change initiative (i.e., a quick fix will not resolve the issue). It also reinforces the concept of piloting ideas and starting small (Cohen et al., 2011; Langley et al., 2009).

As technical problems are unambiguous (i.e., they are definable and they have existing solutions that stakeholders can apply), the focus is to help individuals determine if the type of challenge they are dealing with is partially or fully adaptive (Heifetz, Grashow & Linsky, 2009). To make this determination, the authors propose to notice the presence of "red flags" and to link these to a broader category of adaptive issues (Table 10).

Table 10

Diagnosing an Adaptive Challenge

Red Flags	Related Concept
Increasingly, complaints are used when describing the problem.	Ongoing gap between the vision and the current situation.
Previously successful external and internal change agents are unable to solve the situation.	Previous solutions are not effective.
Traditional problem-solving methods are not successful and the number of failures is increasing.	Research and new learning are needed.
When the current team is having challenges towards successfully addressing the issue.	Inclusion of new stakeholder groups to gain different perspectives.
Problem reappears after a "quick fix" has been tried.	The wrong problem has been addressed and/or a longer time frame is required.
Increasing conflict and frustration that results in the openness to try something to resolve the situation.	A sense of crisis is being felt.

Note. Noticing "red flags" helps the adaptive leader determine what type of problem they are facing, and also narrows potential next steps, such as: what type of learning is needed, which stakeholders to include and which potential avenue to consider when searching for solutions. Adapted from "The Practice of Adaptive Leadership" by R. Heifetz, A. Grashow and M. Linsky, 2009, Harvard Business Review Press, p. 74.

Thus, when supporting schools in the change initiative process, the consultant asks the school leader and their team to consider which type of challenge they are facing. To do so, the change agent formulates the "red flags" as questions, such as: Have you tried to address this issue in the past? How many times did you attempt to resolve this issue? Were some solutions successful? Who was involved at the time? Do others believe this is important to solve? Do people talk about this issue? If so, how do they describe it? And, who has the agency to act directly upon the problem?

The purpose of these prompting questions is twofold. First, it gives voice to the participants and gives them the agency to think through their identified problem (Heifetz, 1994; Rogers, 1961, 1980), which aids them to take ownership of their challenge. Secondly, the process helps build the team's confidence about the process, as they are putting their knowledge into practice—as represented previously in Figure 6.

However, an adaptive issue is not the same at all ecological layers. For example, an adaptive problem at the consultant's level is process-related, whereas, at the school level, it pertains to the consequences of mental health concerns (Figure 8). Thus, to address an adaptive problem, Heifetz (1994) suggests breaking down the problem into manageable parts, so certain pieces become technical in nature and a successful resolution can occur. These "quick wins", as noted in other frameworks (Kotter, 1996; Cawsey et al., 2016) serve as "stories" to build momentum and motivation to help stakeholders strive towards the long-term vision (Heifetz, 1994). Furthermore, as a consultant works at arm's length, the agency to act upon the identified adaptive problem belongs to stakeholders, which reinforces Heifetz's (1994) principle of giving the work back to the group who is facing the issue. Regardless, stakeholders are not alone in the process, as the external change agent works alongside them.

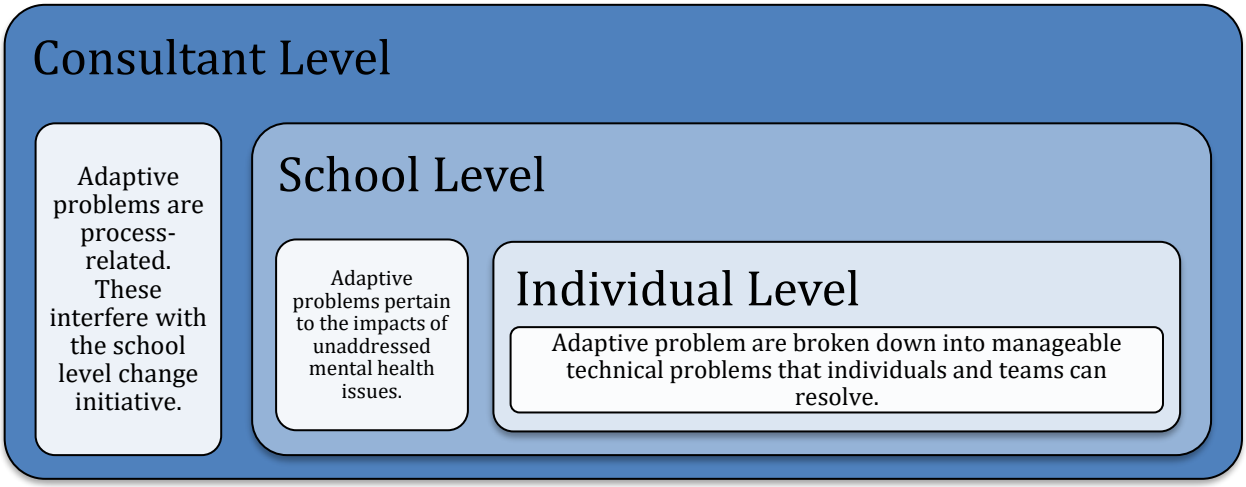

Figure 8. Differing adaptive problems per ecological level.

While adaptive issues can be broken down into smaller components and applied at the individual level, since no two schools are the same, it is assumed that their adaptive problems also differ. Therefore, potential process-related solutions to resolve the PoP that are within the consultant's sphere of influence requires flexibility to adjust to different contexts, and innovativeness to help address complex issues.

Possible Solutions to Address the Problem of Practice

Following a critical analysis of "What's the Problem?" the next task is to generate solutions that fit the issue and the context. Finding creative options is difficult when there are multiple potential causes related to a problem, which further adds to its complexity. Thus, to help stakeholders find original ideas to their adaptive problem, a process inspired by the field of *Design Thinking* (DT) is suggested. The DT approach has three phases: an analysis phase (such as the one completed in the critical analysis section), an ideation phase (creating new solutions and prototyping them), and finally, an implementation phase. Another benefit of DT is how its process aligns with the key conditions towards enhancing job satisfaction (Leithwood, 2006) as mentioned by teachers. Specifically, the DT approach is a team effort, where the focus is to start small, learn from and engage stakeholders, enhance collective decision-making and constantly communicate ideas and progress.

Solution Ideation Process

Once the analysis is completed, the focus moves towards the *ideation process* (Figure 9) in order to help stakeholders generate creative ideas that fit their context. The cyclical approach, which is meant to be simple and intuitive for the user, has six parts to it: the problem statement, brainstorm, butterfly, prototype and feedback, try and adopt & build or change. While there are elements that seem to overlap with the *Action-Driven Change Framework*, their purposes differ,

as DT *ideation process* aims to generate relevant solutions. The following provides an example of the process in question.

Problem Statement. Before generating ideas, it is important to create a problem statement that both resembles an open-ended question and is also tied to the *vision.* The question, which anchors the activity, is tailored to the audience who is tasked to find solutions relative to the issue. For example, the consultant can propose the following sentence for their focus group: "What might help school leaders and their teams adopt and maintain a change process that will not burden their busy schedules and aid them to achieve their vision?" Additionally, the facilitator can create a brief narrative to explain the problem from a user's perspective. This viewpoint promotes empathy (Heifetz, 1994; Rogers, 1961, 1980) towards the circumstances of another and helps motivate the team towards resolving of the situation. Thus, the question and narrative both serve as prompts for the brainstorming session. The content of the narrative can be inspired by the previous exercise in the *Critical Organizational Analysis* section.

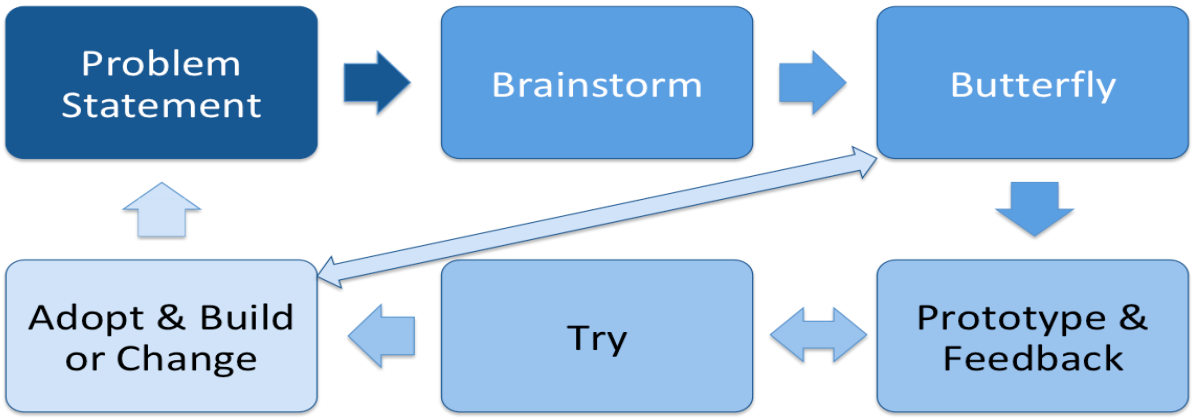

Figure 9. The Ideation Process. Inspired from the field of *Design Thinking*. Adapted from "Change by Design" by T. Brown, 2009, New York, NY: Harper Collins Books; "The Art of Innovation" by T. Kelley and J. Littman, 2001, New York, NY: Doubleday, Random House, and "Design Thinking: Driving Innovation Program", by D. Meister, 2018, personal course notes, London, ON: Ivey Business School.

A narrative example. My name is Mrs. M., and I have been a principal for many years. I have always wanted to work in the field of education, as I am passionate about helping students

become lifelong learners. I also value my team of teachers and staff, as they are the key contributors to our school's positive climate and are the ones who make student achievement possible. However, I work long hours to meet the increasing administrative demands expected of me and I feel I am becoming an operational administrator, which I find limiting. Thus, while I believe that a positive school climate is essential, I feel that leading a change initiative and maintaining its process will be too much for me.

Brainstorm and Butterfly. The second and third components of the cycle have the purpose of first generating many ideas (i.e., brainstorm), then refining these ideas into specific choices (i.e., butterfly) (Brown, 2009). To aid with this process, Kelley and Littman (2001) suggest doing a brief "warm-up" activity to help the group relax and bond. This focus is similar to establishing a safe holding environment (Heifetz, 1994). A preparatory activity could be similar to an improvisation exercise. For example, the consultant asks small teams to plan a Holiday party. For the first three minutes, participants must reply to any proposed ideas by adding: "yes, but…" The next three minutes, teams are asked to plan a school summer BBQ, and must contribute by saying: "yes, and…" Afterwards, participants report back to the group, indicating which party they feel would be the most fun to attend. The facilitator then highlights the importance of listening to their teammates and the responsibility they have as participants to add their ideas, rather than finding limitations.

Once warmed up, guidelines are stated. Namely, to: stay on topic, be mindful of the time allocated and number of responses produced. While this might sound like a typical meeting, it is vastly different. For example, leaders do not speak first, people do not wait their turn to talk—as they are expected to build on others' suggestions—and silliness and wild ideas are encouraged (Brown, 2009; Kelley & Littman, 2001). Finally, prior to starting the brainstorming element of

the activity, the facilitator asks the group to add three criteria as well as two constraints that need to be met in order for the solution to be acceptable. For instance, the solution needs to be fun, simple and positive, and it must not be time consuming for the user, and it must have a team approach. The approach asks participants to develop their "opposable mind" (Martin, 2007), which requires them to suggest solutions that focus on "both/and" (i.e., striving towards ideas that both answers the question and include all the constraints and criteria). Once these different components are agreed upon (Appendix F), participants are given a time frame to complete the brainstorming activity. Kelley and Littman (2001) suggest that this can take up to an hour, but it can also be as short as 3 minutes. Team members say their ideas then write them on Post-it notes of the same colour, so people's ideas are not distinguishable. These are then put in a pile at the centre of the table and are saved for the follow-up activity: *Butterfly*.

Brainstorm, Butterfly and the PoP. The purpose of the present section is twofold. First, it is meant to model how the suggested process is done. Second, it serves to generate ideas for potential solutions to address the PoP based on previously discussed conditions. Table 11 provides an example of the completed brainstorming activity, following, which the *butterfly* activity begins. The purpose of this task is to narrow down the proposed ideas and choose those that resonate the most for the group. The process is to read through each idea and place these on the wall—if Post-it notes were used. As common ideas occur, they are grouped together into broader themes. To demonstrate this process, the broad theme of each idea is written in blue in Table 11.

Table 11

Brainstorm and Butterfly

1. Notice existing processes and see if/how they can align with the change process. Structure	2. Have a space/environment that contributes to creativity. Structure

3. Have a gradual plan that focuses on small changes to achieve a big goal. Process	4. Build on what is known and what people are comfortable with. Knowledge
5. Create a simple self-guided toolkit. Knowledge and capacity building	6. Model the process through coaching. Knowledge and capacity building
7. Create an online training tutorial. Knowledge and capacity building	8. Maintain the status quo. No change
9. Hire actors to create a positive work environment through positive mental health practices (i.e., they smile, laugh, listen, are motivated in doing the task and share with others about how easy it is to do). Implementation supports	10. Rather than an "ask the expert", have an "ask your colleagues" forum that is moderated by a facilitator. Implementation supports
11. Have an online community of practice to seek support and ideas from others. Implementation supports	12. Share within and beyond the school, stories and visuals that highlight local successes. Process/motivation

Note. The brainstorming that generated these ideas was time limited—three minutes—and intended to answer the question: "What might help school leaders and their teams adopt and maintain a change process that will not burden their busy schedules and aid them to achieve their vision?" The Butterfly classification—words in blue—occurred afterwards to find common themes and ideas.

The broad themes were: no change; structures; process; process and motivation; knowledge; knowledge and capacity; and implementation supports. Interestingly, the areas of possible solutions continue to align with the findings stemming from the previous analysis that suggested focusing on: implementation supports, knowledge, learning and resources, leadership and aligned structures, as well as proactively influencing stakeholders' motivation. This latter point is reinforced by Scaccia et al.'s (2015) $R=MC^2$ heuristic, which suggests that motivation (M) is an essential part of an organization's readiness level. However, this undoubtedly varies per individual within each school. Therefore, it is essential to consider what promotes motivation towards adopting and maintaining an ongoing change process.

According to Pink (2011), an individual is motivated when they (1) are autonomous in their work (2) feel competent and (3) have a sense of meaning. Ideally, solutions would consider these three elements. For example, a consultant could engage with the school leader and their

teams from the outset, so these teams are framing the issue, analyzing their situation and identifying their solution. This proactive collaborative work helps stakeholders have a sense of ownership towards the successful implementation of their co-created solution (Fixsen et al., 2005; Greenhalgh, et al., 2004; Keown, et al., 2008; Leithwood, 2005; Lockwood & Papke, (2018); Rogers, 2003). However, participation does not guarantee engagement, as conditions such as leader commitment and structures that promote staff involvement are also necessary (Daniels, Gedikli, Watson, Semkina, & Vaughn, 2017).

In addition, gaining a sense of competency "requires appropriate learning experiences; it does not emerge spontaneously" (Bandura, 1997, p. 15). Therefore, the proposed *Learning Cascade* (Figure 6), which proposes a process where learning is acquired through knowledge, application, teaching and observing, is a beneficial approach to reinforce the selected solution. Finally, to address the sense of meaning, research suggests tailoring a communication message so it underscores the benefits of the proposed solution for the end user according to their ecological level (Cunningham et al., 2002; Dresler-Hawke & Veer, 2006; Mei et al., 2004).

With these various considerations in mind, the following three proposals were selected for their alignment with the above-mentioned findings and for their contribution to the likelihood of motivating individuals to engage with the solution in question. They were also mainly chosen because they are congruent with the PoP. Specifically, they are processes that an external change agent can use to support school leaders and their teams move towards professional practices that promote positive mental health.

These proposed options are to: (1) create a simple self-guided change leadership toolkit; (2) facilitate a virtual community of practice (CoP) that favours active support and ideas from

others; and (3) build upon existing structures and see if/how they can align with the change process—such as professional learning communities.

Interestingly, these three options are interrelated. For example, a school could choose to build on existing structures (i.e., proposal 3) and incorporate a self-guided change leadership toolkit (i.e., proposal 1). They would then take part in a community of practice to learn from others who are also working towards a common vision (i.e., proposal 2). While all three of these are viable options, one needs to be selected in order to be unpacked in chapter 3.

Thus, to help the selection process, each option was analyzed following common questions: What is the purpose of the proposal? How will this proposal enhance the motivation of participants? What needs to change at the school and consultant levels? What are the needed resources? Who is responsible for specific activities? What are the benefits of the proposal for the user and the consultant? And finally, how will a *rapid prototyping* process help?

For brevity, all three proposals are summarized and compared in Table 12; however, the detailed descriptions of these options are found in Appendices G, H and I.

Table 12

Proposals Comparative Summary Table

	Suggested Proposals		
	Proposal 1 Toolkit	Proposal 2 CoP	Proposal 3 Use existing structures
What is the purpose of the proposal?	A supportive tool that establishes a common language and process.	A collegial platform to support schools who are working on a similar change initiative.	Analysis of existing school structures to incorporate the change framework.
How will this proposal enhance the motivation of participants?	The solution promotes professional autonomy and competency. The consultant adds a sense of meaning by weaving in the benefits of the	The solution promotes professional autonomy, competency and sense of meaning.	The solution promotes professional autonomy and competency. The consultant adds a sense of meaning by weaving in the benefits of the

	interventions.		interventions.
What needs to change at the consultant level?	The consultant ensures that the toolkit meets the needs of stakeholders.	First, determine the appetite of stakeholders for this approach, then demonstrate its value, and ensure there is a focused topic.	First, the consultant, leader and team do a mapping exercise of existing structures. Then, adapt these to the change framework.
What needs to change at the school level?	First, school leaders and their teams must acknowledge the need for change, then act on it.	A familiar process for schools, but time is required for synchronistic sessions.	Engage with participants to determine if "merger" between existing structure and change framework is acceptable.
What are the needed resources?	Team Time Learning opportunity Technology	Alignment Team Time Technology	Team Time Learning opportunity
Who is responsible?	Research: consultant; Prototyping: focus group; Application: school leader and team.	Research: consultant; Networking: consultant & users; Prototyping: focus group; Application: school leader and team.	Initial assessment: consultant and school leaders and team; Prototyping: identified school team; Application: school leader and team.
What are the benefits of this solution for the user?	Flexibility; Meets the level of need of stakeholders.	Inspires and motivates stakeholders; Flexible; Supportive.	Builds upon existing structures.
What are the benefits of this proposal for the consultant?	Provides flexibility and contextualization.	Addresses the concern of sustainability; A facilitator can support in an ongoing manner.	Builds upon existing structures, thus change framework is not an add-on, but integrated.
How will a *rapid prototyping* process help?	Tailor the toolkit to stakeholders needs.	Tailor the CoP platform so it is relevant to users.	Helps to contextualize and adapt the framework locally.

Note. The purpose of this table is to compare each of the proposed options to inform the selection of the proposal to be further explored in chapter 3.

When considering the three possible proposals, all of which are viable, for the purpose of this OIP, the selected solution is No. 1. The primary reason this option was chosen is because it

is directly within the sphere of influence of the consultant, as they can develop a change leadership toolkit. Furthermore, this alternative meets the priorities identified in chapter 1 (i.e., it is simple, it promotes the school team's sustainable capacity and it actively engages teams towards finding and applying their locally identified solutions). However, for the solution to be well-rounded, the toolkit needs to be differentiated and contextualized to meet the unique needs of schools.

Prototype, Feedback and Try. As discussed in each proposed solution, the purpose of *rapidly prototyping* (Liedtka & Ogilvie, 2011) a solution is to get direct feedback from the target audience for whom the resource is intended. Feedback offers the developer a sense of what is important for the user, and most importantly, what is not. It also allows staying focused on the intention of the resource, working through barriers and ensuring that the proposed activities work. Also, receiving quick recommendations in the development cycle limits costly errors that would otherwise be caught at the end of a process. Finally, trying the said solution is key, because an idea that looks good on paper, could in practice, look vastly different. Thus, it is important to continue the cycle of prototype, feedback and try, as each time, the product or practice is ameliorated. However, it is possible that a proposed solution does not resonate with stakeholders. In such circumstance, changes are needed.

Adopt & Build or Change. The last component of the *ideation process* is to either *adopt & build* the proposed solution or to *change* solutions, directions, or even the problem itself. The purpose of prototyping a low or no cost solution and gaining rapid feedback from the user is to quickly determine whether or not the solution is worth pursuing. In some cases, they are worth it, thus more investment of time and resources can be made towards developing the idea and implementing it. However, when the idea does not resonate, the team can either select another

proposed solution from the *Butterfly* section, they can start a new *Brainstorming* session or they can try to formulate another open-ended question. Whichever the outcome of the prototyping process, the main focus of DT is to make simple and fast prototypes and to quickly learn what works and what does not (Kelley & Littman, 2001; Liedtka & Ogilvie, 2011).

However, while the above frameworks and processes are informed by research, and they are meant to help users progress towards their vision, does this mean they are ethical?

Leadership Ethics and Organizational Change Issues

Issues related to ethics can occur at any point during the change process. It is thus the responsibility of the firm and the external change agent to engage in ethical leadership and foster a collaborative environment where trusting working relationships can flourish (Heifetz, 1994).

Leading Ethically

As the *ALT Leadership Model* suggests (Figure 2), the work of the consultant is based in authenticity and ethical behaviour (Avolio & Gardner, 2005) as they strive to engage in mature professional relationships (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995) to access *Transformational Leadership* (Bass, 2008). However, while this model is meant to be strength-based (i.e., to build on positive foundations of various leadership models), there is still a risk for unethical behaviour. For example, it is possible that leaders indicating that they are transformational are in fact a pseudo-transformational leader (Bass, 2008; Christie, Barling, & Turner, 2011). The main difference stems in three of the 4 I's. Briefly, both types of leaders inspire their followers, but that is their only commonality. As the purpose of the pseudo-transformational leader is self-motivated rather than focused on the success of their followers, thus, the other "I's" are compromised.

Therefore, the firm and the leader must be aware of this possibility. To monitor the consultant's perceived integrity by the client, the firm offers a follow-up survey, such as the

Perceived Leader Integrity Scale (Craig & Gustafson, 1998). The purpose of using this tool is to ensure an ongoing quality improvement of the services offered by the external change agent, as well as a means to protect the client from potentially unethical behaviour of consultants.

In addition to monitoring consultants' ethical behaviour, the firm and the external change agent also ensure an ethical support to schools.

What are the Ethical Responsibilities of the Firm and the Consultant?

As the consultant is not part of the school where the change is occurring, many important ethical considerations are necessary. For example, as the quote "do no harm" (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 85) suggests, it is the priority of an ethical change agent and leader to ensure that stakeholders do not encounter any unintended consequences related to their participation in the change initiative. For example, it is possible that certain team members do not have a positive rapport with their school leader and they are fearful of repercussions that might ensue if they were to share opposing or challenging comments towards the leader or the change initiative. Their concern is that the information provided in the context of the project might be used "against" them in other settings. As the consultant is external to the organization, they would not be aware of these internal dynamics (Cawsey et al., 2016). Thus, it is the obligation of the firm and the consultant to take measures to address these legitimate concerns before the start of the initiative. While not all possible situations can be anticipated, it is important that stakeholders are made aware of the purpose of the initiative, as well as its potential risks and benefits.

One way to do so is to establish an agreement with the school leader and their team, where the consultant seeks to gain their informed consent to participate. According to Cohen et al. (2011), this would include: (1) a description of the purpose, framework and processes of the change initiative—as highlighted in previous sections of this document; (2) any potential

negative consequences, which may occur during the process, such as *scapegoating* (Bass, 2008); (3) the expected benefits of participating in the change initiative; (4) the right to withdraw or re-join the project; (5) to know which data is collected, for what purpose, how it is used, stored and reported upon; (6) to know about their rights and obligations related to confidentiality and its limitation (i.e., in the event where the consultant is made aware of a situation that may cause harm to certain participants); (7) an opportunity for all team members to confidentially ask clarifying questions directly to the consultant; and (8) a signed consent contract that contains an outline of the above points.

However, as there may be delicate topics addressed that could potentially aggravate tensions at school, for example, if a team identifies leadership as being an issue on the *Initial Readiness Assessment* (Appendix D); a potentially different course of action may be required. But the intention of being ethical is not to become an alarmist. Therefore, it is important to first determine what a low leadership score means to the team. For example, do they feel that their leader would benefit from clearer communication about their commitment to the vision, or are they indicating that the current leadership style is a source of distress for them? If the concern were along the lines of the latter, because the focus of the consultation is not to address leadership/staff issues, the matter would be brought to the attention of their immediate supervisor (i.e., the superintendent). In order to act ethically, the consultant has indicated this course of action from the outset if such an event occurred and have requested the school leader's consent to this process. If informed consent were not received, unfortunately, the consultant would not be able to work with this particular school. This process is congruent with the consultant's ethical beliefs where one does no harm and also provides the school leader to offer—or not—their informed consent, thus contributing to a trusting working relationship.

Chapter Conclusion

This chapter focused on bridging the theoretical knowledge to a more actionable practice. Specifically, many tangible processes, which align well with the education sector, were unpacked. These were the *Action-Driven Change Framework*, the *Learning Cascade* and the *Ideation Process*. These three theoretical frameworks helped to generate a list of options that would address the problem of practice under investigation. While all solutions were viable (and complementary), the development of a self-guided toolkit was selected, as it is directly within the sphere of influence of the consultant. Thus, with the new solution in hand, and ethical considerations in mind, the next and final chapter of this OIP refines an implementation, monitoring and communication plan to help the solution gain traction with its stakeholders.

Chapter 3 – From Knowing to Doing

To help find processes that an external change agent can use to support school leaders and their teams move towards professional practices that promote positive mental health, as per the proposed PoP under investigation, three proposals were suggested. These were: (1) create a simple self-guided change leadership toolkit; (2) facilitate a virtual community of practice that promotes ongoing learning and sharing of ideas with others; and (3) build upon existing structures and see if/how they can align with the change process. While all three of these solutions were worthy of consideration, the first option was chosen as it was within the direct sphere of control of the consultant. Thus, the focus of this final chapter is to delve deeper into the sustainable implementation of the selected solution. Finally, this OIP concludes with a few suggestions for future research opportunities in the fields of change leadership and education.

Change Implementation Plan

According to the *Action-Driven Change Framework,* the following step is: *What's the Plan?* (Figure 10). In this quadrant, the user creates an action plan, chooses the success criteria and pilots the suggested solutions to determine the viability of the approach and to adjust if needed. Thus, to model this process, the following section unpacks the goals and activities towards achieving the successful implementation of the selected solution: the toolkit. While the importance of tools and resources was previously noted, research highlights that to be well-rounded depends on three key elements: capacity building, implementation supports and alignment of the leadership and structures (Albers et al., 2017; Davis & Edwards, 2013; Fixsen et al., 2005; Grimshaw et al., 2012; Hughes et al., 2008; Pollock et al., 2014; Salsberg, & Macaulay, 2013; Santor et al., 2009; SBMHSA,

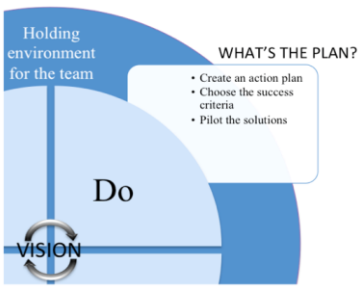

Figure 10. Action-Driven Change Framework: What's the Plan?

2013; Ward et al., 2012). Thus, the toolkit is enhanced with a learning opportunity, focused both on process—*how to* apply the change framework—and content—the importance and benefits of promoting positive mental health practices at work. This approach is reinforced by the readiness heuristic $R=MC^2$ (Scaccia et al., 2015), where both general and specific capacity building are deemed essential to ensure that stakeholders are ready for a change initiative. Furthermore, in order for the action plan to be congruent with the vision of the firm (i.e., to achieve sustainability), the plan considers the principles of the *Learning Cascade,* where the first iteration of its application is modelled by the consultant to further build upon participants knowledge and sense of competency (Cunningham et al., 2014; Pink, 2011). In other words, creating a stand-alone toolkit would be insufficient and would resemble the ineffective "train and hope" approach towards implementation (Barwick et al., 2019).

However, given that the consultant is external to the school setting, and they have limited understanding of the school's internal dynamics (Cawsey et al., 2016), an intentional focus on engaging with stakeholders ensures that the change framework fits and aligns with their context.

Alignment and Benefits

Because alignment is key (Burton et al., 2016), known change theories within the education sector were intentionally selected to inform, the *Action-Driven Change Framework*. To further enhance this model, the process of *Design Thinking* (DT) was integrated, as the benefits of this approach are closely connected to: the conditions that promote teacher job satisfaction (Leithwood, 2006); teachers' preferred way of learning (Cunningham et al., 2014); and enhanced stakeholders' motivation (Pink, 2011). For example, the DT principles engage stakeholders from the start, so they are part of the development and the ongoing decision-making process. The incorporation of rapid feedback loops quickly tries the creative ideas generated

locally. This process has the additional function to communicate constantly, which allows for concerns or resistance to be voiced by those applying the intervention, thus providing the opportunity to briskly adjust the approach. To ensure, however, that these suggestions are formulated as reflective feedback, rather than comments laced with criticism and judgment, it is important that the school leader and their team collaboratively establish team functioning rules (Liedtka & Ogilvie, 2011). This structure allows for personal concerns to be appropriately articulated (e.g., using "I" statements), instead of using the "devil's advocates" stance, which invites only viewing the "downside, the problems, the disasters in-waiting" (Kelley & Littman, 2005, p. 2). Thus, by building into the change framework these universal approaches that promote positive mental health and motivation, it is plausible that the model aligns well with a school setting.

However, while the framework is theoretically aligned and has many applicable benefits, the learning opportunities, resources (i.e., toolkit) and supports that help embed this intervention in schools do not occur on their own. Thus, it is imperative for the consultant to morsel their adaptive problem (i.e., integrating a sustainable change process into schools), into smaller tasks, making these more manageable at an individual level—as represented in Figure 8.

Managing the Transition: Think Big, Start Small

Prior to articulating an implementation plan, which has goals, specific activities, and desired outcomes, a road map is key to help guide the planning process (Table 13). The purpose is to ensure that steps are not inadvertently missed or are implemented out of sequence. For example, the consultant considers how to integrate the change process through developing the supportive resources, capacity building and monitoring tools to support the successful implementation of the toolkit. Thus, to develop the "road map" the consultant begins with the

end in mind, which is ultimately to enact the solution for change. The long-term goals are then elaborated, as these are the final objectives towards achieving the *vision*. Following which short-term goals are established in order to provide a starting point. Finally, the medium-term goals bridge the gap between the two previously determined extremities.

Table 13

Overview of Short, Medium and Long-Term Goals

Solution for Change	Develop a toolkit with an aligned and differentiated learning offering, followed by implementation coaching support to school leaders and their team.		
Strategy for Change	Influence sustainable change leadership practices through knowledge, resources and supports.		
	Short-Term Goal	Medium-Term Goal	Long-Term Goal
Area of Focus	Resource and Capacity Building Development	Implementation Support	Alignment of Leadership and Structures
Timeline	6-8 months	1-3 months	Ongoing
Goals	G.1.1 Develop learning opportunities, which are process and content related, to aid school leaders and their teams to promote positive mental health practices.	G.2.1 The consultant offers capacity building to school leaders and their teams.	G.3.1 School leaders and their teams continue to apply the change framework towards addressing positive mental health practices.
	G.1.2 Develop a professional self-guided change leadership resource.	G.2.2 The consultant models the change leadership process with school leaders and their teams.	G.3.2 School leaders and their teams explore ways to integrate the change framework into existing structures.

Note. This "road map" overview is a meant to inform the implementation plan.

The suggested steps to implement the toolkit are sequenced within the three areas of focus highlighted in previous chapters. Specifically, the work builds upon resource development (i.e., toolkit) and capacity building, which is then modelled by an external change agent (i.e., implementation supports), and finally, is integrated within existing school structures (i.e., alignment). However, even if the goal G.3.2 is situated under *Long-Term Goal*, the activity, which is the third proposed solution highlighted in chapter 2, can also be initiated in the medium-

term (i.e., when the consultant is supporting the implementation). But for the purpose of this OIP, the overview of the action plan follows the sequence indicated in Table 13.

The plan in question (Table 14) details the activities meant to achieve each goal. For every activity, potential challenges are highlighted. These barriers, such as time constraints, stakeholders' values and beliefs related to the topic, readiness level, perceived benefits and feeling ill-prepared to apply and integrate the change process, are to be considered by the consultant while researching, planning and executing the activities within the plan. Additionally, when considering the topic of mental health, there is an ethical layer to be attentive to: do no harm (Cohen et al., 2011). While focusing on universal strategies that promote positive mental health may avoid triggering those more vulnerable to the topic, it remains essential to ensure that well-intentioned solutions are verified (Ritchie, 2013), so they do not cause harm.

Furthermore, Damschroder et al. (2009) acknowledge that there are challenges related to any change process, such as: letting go of previous practices (Wang, Maciejewski, Helfrich, & Weiner, 2017); working with those who are resistant to change (Mabin, Forgeson, & Green, 2001), and engaging with key stakeholders towards the uptake of a new practice (Rogers, 2003). However, these challenges are opportunities when considered through the lens of *Design Thinking* (DT). Specifically, when faced with a problem design thinkers go through a structured process to help unleash the creativity of all members of a team. In this process, individuals are engaged from the start and are asked to actively contribute to brainstorming a solution within the set ground rules (Liedtka & Ogilvie, 2011). Then comes the quick prototyping cycle. This process is an integrated mindset where participants prefer to receive feedback rapidly, before investing too much time, energy and resources. To ensure that this mindset is modelled, the action plan is purposefully peppered with such quick learning activities. While this process may

not prevent challenges from occurring, the assumption is the process allows multiple opportunities to engage with and listen to stakeholders, thus building trust and co-creating and refining a vision and solution for change.

The proposed plan outlines key activities, but it does not include a budget line. This is because there is not a unique answer to this question, since every school's needs, structures and budgets vary. Nonetheless, schools need to think about the costs related to: hiring a consultant and establishing a viable structure that ensures a school team is able to apply the change framework in an ongoing way. This implies that there is time allocated for a team to meet to brainstorm new ideas, collect rapid feedback from their peers, adjust the original idea, and scale up the new practice to all within the school. However, as time is not free, the school leader and their team need to reflect upon how to carve out time to implement their change initiative, while considering the working conditions. As this is a critical piece to a successful implementation, the consultant and school leader discuss this topic prior to agreeing on a contract. The consultant and the school leader assess which type of services is needed to achieve their vision. To support the process, examples and strategies are provided, such as the Ontario Principals' Council (2009) case studies. Specifically, case study No. 3 (Appendix J) offers insights on how a school "created" time to implement a professional learning communities (PLC); whereas, case study No. 5 (Appendix K) provides an example of how to build a business case towards accessing additional funds for their PLCs.

Finally, the proposed action plan is a cyclical endeavour to support schools to perpetually ameliorate their school context by promoting mental health practices; therefore, it is not considered complete.

Table 14

Action Plan Overview

Solution for Change	Develop a toolkit with an aligned and differentiated learning offering, followed by implementation coaching support to school leaders and their team.						
Strategy for Change	Influence sustainable change leadership practices through knowledge, resources and supports.						
Topic	Goals	Activities	Challenges	Resources	Responsible	Timeline	Desired Outcomes
Resource and Capacity Building Development	G.1.1 Develop learning opportunities, which are process and content related, to aid school leaders and their teams to promote positive mental health practices.	Conduct research to select pertinent content related to positive mental health practices in school contexts to inform a brief capacity building opportunity.	In the development phase, be cognizant of individuals' beliefs and values about the topic of mental health, as these may engender resistance for some audiences.	UWO Library Google Scholar Amazon books	Consultant to research, analyze and synthesize information into a capacity building format.	1 month	Content selected aims to: raise awareness about positive mental health; highlight the benefits of incorporating positive practices at school; and introduce what can be done at the tier 1 level to promote this topic.
		Prototype the selected content to determine if it meets its intended purpose.	Ethical considerations are needed, as mental health issues may be a sensitive topic for some (i.e., do no harm).	Focus group Time Release time funding for in-service teachers	Focus group of in-service teachers and school leaders to receive the capacity building opportunity and provide feedback.	1 day: feedback 2 weeks: revisions (Author)	Feedback is incorporated to meet the objectives of the capacity building opportunity.

		Align the "content" learning with the *Action-Driven Change Framework* "process" one.	As time is an issue, contextualize the learning to the change process adds value to the professional development.	Time	Links drawn between the "content" and "process" capacity building opportunities.	1 month	The "process" content and activities align with the change process toolkit and can be contextualized according to the school's setting.
		Prototype learning opportunities, offered either in person or online.	Two types of learning opportunities are assessed, as not all learners are the same.	Focus group Time Release time funding for in-service teachers	Stakeholders to receive both types of learning opportunities and offer feedback to determine if the training meets its purpose.	1 day: feedback 2 weeks: revisions	Both formats meet their objectives.
	G.1.2 Develop a professional self-guided change leadership resource.	Determine which topics to include in a change leadership resource.	The challenge is to keep the toolkit simple, yet complete to promote uptake.	UWO Library Google Scholar Amazon books	Consultant to research, analyze and synthesize information into a toolkit format.	1 month	Concise content is selected that aims to help schools implement their local change process.
		Prototype the current *Action-Oriented Change Framework*.	The purpose of the toolkit is to simplify the process of change, not to overwhelm the user.	Focus group Time Release time funding for in-service teachers	Focus group of in-service teachers and school leaders to receive the learning opportunities and provide feedback.	1 day: feedback 2 weeks: revisions	The *Action-Driven Change Framework* is refined to be clear and concise.

		Write concise content and develop simple tools related to the change process and selected topics.	Lack of time is an important challenge. Thus reading a lengthy toolkit is not helpful.	Editor Time	Write content and develop supportive tools.	1 month	Achieve brevity to appeal to the target audience and ensure that activities are clear, fun, simple and meet the objective of supporting the change process.
		Pilot the toolkit and tools.	If the resource does not resonate with stakeholders in terms of content, process and tools, the resource does not meet its purpose.	Focus group Time Release time funding for in-service teachers	Focus group of in-service teachers and school leaders to try and apply the concepts in the toolkit.	1 month: Apply 1 day: feedback 2 weeks: revisions	The pilot helps refine the toolkit and its content to ultimately help stakeholders effectively engage with the change process in their school.
Support	G.2.1 The consultant offers capacity building to school leaders and their teams.	Offer capacity building to school leader, their implementation team and other interested staff.	Lack of motivation and interest in the learning opportunity, resource and change process may interfere with engagement of stakeholders.	Time Release time funding for in-service teachers Venue Technology	School leaders, in-service teachers, and any other interested staff can participate in the learning opportunity.	1–3 hours training	Following the learning opportunity, stakeholders feel more confident towards addressing this change initiative in their school.

	G.2.2 The consultant models the change leadership process with school leaders and their teams.	Support stakeholders when first applying the change leadership approach using the toolkit.	Certain school stakeholders feel ill prepared applying a new approach without initial support and learning.	Consultant School Leader Dedicated team Time	School leaders, in-service teachers and other interested staff apply the change process with support of the consultant.	1–3 month *Action-Driven Change* cycle.	Through the *Learning Cascade,* stakeholders will develop increased confidence in their capacity to apply the change framework.
Alignment of Leadership and Structures	G.3.1 School leaders and their teams continue to apply the change framework towards addressing positive mental health practices.	To gain momentum using the framework, stakeholders share success and broaden its application to others in the school.	Maintaining momentum once the consultant is no longer there to support the implementation of the change framework may be challenging.	Toolkit Time Communication strategies Dedicated team Leader commitment	School leader Dedicated team	Ongoing through *Action-Driven Change* cycles of 1-3 months.	Stakeholders continue to apply the framework and build momentum in their school through communication and the on-boarding of new participants.
	G.3.2 School leaders and their teams explore ways to integrate the change framework into existing structures.	Using the toolkit, stakeholders explore existing structures and teams to determine alignment.	Resistance can occur if an initiative is perceived as being an "add-on" to the work.	Time Leadership commitment Dedicated team Communication Learning opportunities Toolkit	School leader Dedicated team Team members in existing teams/structures	Ongoing through *Action-Driven Change* cycles of 1-3 months.	Stakeholders use the toolkit to help articulate the benefits of integrating the change process within their existing structures.

Note. This detailed action plan unpacks the proposed solution of developing a toolkit for school leaders and their teams towards promoting positive mental health practices at school.

While the implementation plan is a helpful guide to articulate the necessary activities needed to achieve the desired vision, it is also important to assess along the way if the activities are meeting their intended objectives. This process is known as monitoring and evaluation. The following section considers the methods to use in relation to the change initiative.

Change Process Monitoring and Evaluation

The purpose of monitoring and evaluating the change initiative is to determine if the plan and activities are on track towards achieving the desired outcomes and to adjust quickly if the goals are not being met (Metz, Naoom, Halle, & Bartley, 2015). These rapid shifts may aid with the engagement of stakeholders invested in the change process, as time is a known constraint for school leaders and teachers (Leithwood, 2006; Pollock, 2016). Furthermore, gathering information provides tangible stories to help articulate the benefits of applying the *Action-Driven Change Framework* to enhance positive mental health practices at school. This can be utilized to build momentum and broaden the number and variety of stakeholders committed to using the approach—to be discussed in the communication section.

Thus, as the PoP proposes to find processes to support school leaders and their teams to promote positive mental health practices at school, the following proposes a process to help this audience select their monitoring strategies throughout the *Action-Driven Change Framework.*

Monitoring and Evaluation to Track, Gauge and Assess Change

Prior to determining which monitoring and/or evaluation method to adopt throughout the change process, it is necessary to mention that the data collected by the consultant or the school serves the purpose of ensuring ongoing quality improvement, as opposed to research. The former refers to "quantitative and qualitative feedback about the progress and quality of implementation accompanied with regular personal and team debriefing about progress and experience"

(Damschroder et al., 2009, p. 11). Where the latter is defined as "an undertaking intended to extend knowledge through a disciplined inquiry and/or systematic investigation" (Tri Council, 2014, p. 209). Furthermore, while the processes described in this OIP are not research-based, if the consultant collects personal data during the change initiative, consents of participants is required and the data is treated ethically (Cohen et al., 2011; Tri Council, 2014).

Additionally, according to Cawsey et al. (2016), similar to the process of determining if a problem is adaptive or not (Heifetz, 1994), the selection of a relevant measuring strategy depends on the complexity and ambiguity of the change context, as well as the time required to complete the task. Thus, within the context of this OIP, as there are many interconnecting variables within the education system, in addition to potential sensitivities related to the topic of mental health, the context is complex and ambiguous. The recommended measures would therefore need to be simple and aim to incorporate rapid feedback loops, such as the design thinking process (Brown, 2009; Kelley & Littman, 2001), in order to perpetually learn as the plan progresses towards the desired vision (Cawsey et al., 2016; Metz et al., 2015).

Thus, as data collection requires simplicity, the proposed monitoring strategies are sequenced in accordance to the *Action-Driven Change Framework*. Specifically, Table 15 introduces, what needs to be measured, why it is being measured and finally, some suggested tools to gather the information and track progress. Finally, the goals from Table 14 are included to help track, gauge and assess the implementation plan's progress.

Table 15

Monitoring and Evaluation per the Action-Driven Change Framework Quadrants

Core and Quadrants	What is Measured?	Why Measure?	Potential Monitoring Approaches/Tools
Vision	Agreement of the school leader and	While an initial vision can be drafted, the final iteration is co-	• **School staff meeting:** Where ideas are requested

	staff about a common vision.	defined by the school leader and staff. The purpose is to engage everyone towards a common vision for the school. Thus, assessing the percentage of those who are in agreement with the vision helps the school leader and their team to be aware of the ratio of staff who are committed to the change, and those who are not.	and incorporated in the final iteration. • Brief **perception survey** to determine the ratio between those who are committed to the proposed vision and those who are not.
What's the Problem?	Baseline assessment of where the school is currently with respect to the vision.	Knowing what to work on to achieve the desired vision requires knowing about the current situation is and noticing any barriers that are preventing the desired outcome. The purpose is thus to raise awareness about "what is". This exercise also provides a baseline to compare how the work is progressing.	• **PESTE analysis** (Appendices B and C): Using existing aggregated data, such as school climate surveys; issues raised by staff over the years; de-identified human resource data (i.e., staff absenteeism, sick leaves, turnover rates…); student grades. • **Journey mapping** (Liedtka & Ogilvie, 2011) of the identified issue creating a barrier towards achieving the vision. • **Perception survey** of leader and staff about the ability to successfully achieve the vision.
	Readiness of the school to work towards the established vision.	The purpose is to determine the readiness level of the school to implement a change initiative and to learn about the current areas of strength and need.	• **Initial readiness assessment** (Appendices D and E).
What's the Plan?	Pre-implementation capacity building. **G.2.1**	While the capacity building opportunity and accompanying toolkit were developed and informed by a focus group through rapid feedback	• **Pre-post questionnaires** about the knowledge acquired during the learning opportunity. • **Perception surveys** about

		loops—**G.1.1. and G.1.2**—it is good practice to assess if participants achieved the learning goals of the learning opportunity.	the relevance of the learning opportunity and toolkit towards the applicability of the proposed change process.

	Initial implementation of *Action-Driven Change Framework* and contextual solution with the support of the consultant. **G.2.2**	The purpose of the ongoing monitoring process is essential in this section, as stakeholders are applying the strategy they have selected and learning quickly on how the intervention is working. However, to be able to know if the activity is successful, while the perception of the school staff and leader is valuable, observing the difference—through pre-determined indicators and look-fors—adds quantitative data to the process. Finally, as the consultant supports the school in the portion of implementation process—as per the *Learning Cascade*—a perception survey and an authentic leadership questionnaire is requested.	• **Ideation process:** Rapid feedback loops between the leader, the dedicated team and school staff during the co-creation process and initial implementation.
			• Locally developed **indicators/look-fors** to help self-assess whether the proposed activity is meeting its objective.
			• **Perception surveys** about the benefits of:
			  ○ The selected positive mental health practice.
			  ○ The change framework.
			  ○ The support of the consultant.
			• ***Perceived Leader Integrity Scale*** (Craig & Gustafson, 1998): to assess the consultant's authentic behaviour.

	Full implementation of the identified solution using the change framework. **G.3.1 & G.3.2**	The purpose of monitoring during the full implementation is to determine if the selected practice meets the needs of a broader audience and to adjust when needed. Furthermore, while striving towards sustainability, the school leader and their team may wish to assess whether or not the current school structures and processes	• **Ideation process:** Ongoing rapid feedback loops between the leader, the dedicated team and school staff during the full implementation process. • Locally developed **indicators/look-fors** to help self-assess whether the proposed activity is meeting its objective. • Brief **perception survey**

		support or hinder the selected intervention. Thus, a journey mapping exercise accompanied by look-fors helps the school to determine this.	about the benefits of: ○ The selected positive mental health practice. ○ The change framework. • **Journey mapping** while paying attention to **look-fors** to determine if there are practices and structures that need to be adjusted.
What's the Story?	Collecting and analyzing the data.	The purpose of measuring the progress made in comparison with the baseline data is to: make data-driven decisions, build momentum and maintain motivation towards the vision. For example, the analysis helps stakeholders "see" the difference of their efforts. The information gathered can also help shape key messaging about the benefits of the selected approach. Finally, the school leader and their team can assess if the *Action-Driven Change Framework* still meets their needs.	• Revaluation of initial baseline assessments (i.e, **PESTE, journey mapping, perception survey and readiness).** • **Compare** new data with the baseline information. • **Frame the results** in a way to "**share the story**". • Brief **perception survey** about the ongoing benefits of: ○ The change framework.
What's Next?	Determine the next steps.	The purpose of this section is to allow the school leader and their team to make an informed decision relative to their next steps. For example, does their data suggest that they had a: • Successful strategy, but need adjustments to the current plan; • Successful strategy and expands the intervention to new stakeholder groups; or • Unsuccessful strategy,	• **School staff meeting:** Where data is shared and ideas are requested for the proposed next steps. • **Start new *Action-Driven Change Framework* cycle** according to the agreed upon next steps.

	determines if a new problem is required, or simply a new activity to implement.

Note. This proposed table outlines monitoring opportunities that occur during the *Action-Driven Change Framework*. The purpose is to raise awareness, through data, about what is the position of the school relative to their vision. Then, through information, stakeholders target a relevant problem that is preventing their school from achieving their vision. Furthermore, the ongoing rapid feedback loops permit stakeholders to adjust their interventions quickly if necessary. Finally, through a reassessment and comparison of the initial and the new data collected, the school is able to make decisions about their next steps.

Monitoring tools help change leaders and their teams gather the necessary data to inform their decision-making process towards achieving their vision. While the suggested tools are meant to be straightforward, not all stakeholders have the same level of fluency in this area of work. Therefore, the consultant has a role to play in support schools with this topic.

Leadership Approaches to Change in the Context of Monitoring

A consultant's leadership role remains the same throughout the change process. This is true in the context of monitoring and evaluation, as their objective is still to build capacity towards sustainably applying the change process in an ongoing way. As such, through the *Learning Cascade,* the consultant supports and models, as per the goals G.2.1 and G.2.2 in Table 14, the contextualization of tools that are meant to help schools reach their vision.

Contextual Tool Development

Working from the premise that a "one-size-fits-all" approach to change does not exist, the leadership role of the consultant, relative to monitoring and evaluating change, is to provide guiding principles to the school leader and their team. By offering tips about how to build locally relevant tools to track one's progress, the consultant ensures that: key and ethical considerations are taken into account; a successful data collection process is applied; and a common language and understanding exist among team members about this topic. This approach recognizes that—

in any given school—the level of experience and expertise related to quality improvement measures may vary from novice to expert and what is being evaluated also differs.

Perception Surveys. As identified in Table 15, perception surveys were favoured throughout the *Action-Driven Change Framework.* The rationale for selecting this method is to learn how stakeholders involved—directly or indirectly—in the change initiative perceive the elements within it, such as: the vision, the activities, the implementation process and the overall opinion about the change initiative. As Bernhardt (2018) indicates, everyone has perceptions and act upon these daily. Changing these views require a change in behaviour. Brown (2009) further adds that to help an individual try something new, it is preferable to build on behaviours that are familiar to them. Thus, through the application of the locally relevant and selected positive mental health practice Bernhardt (2018) indicates that the perceptions of stakeholders involved shift. Therefore, monitoring these evolving perceptions is very informative within the change process. As such, to assess perceptions, Bernhardt (2018) suggests using questionnaires, interviews, focus groups, or self-assessment tools. While all these tools are pertinent, questionnaires are favoured, as these can be anonymous and administered at different points in time to evaluate the change initiative's progress.

However, developing a questionnaire has many variables to consider. To reinforce how nuanced and complex the process is, both Bernhardt (2018) and Cohen et al. (2011) have dedicated full chapters in their books related to the topic. But, for the purpose of this OIP and in the interest of brevity, a few key principles were summarized for stakeholders to consider when constructing a successful questionnaire that is purposeful, simple, short and understandable.

First, the writing team determines what the objective of the questionnaire is. Because such a tool may take some time to construct, Bernhardt (2018) suggests reviewing the literature

to see if any questionnaires that look at similar objectives exist—a step that prevents unnecessary time spent on the development phase. If no previously developed measure exists, then the writing team reflects upon the content of the questionnaire. For example, do the questions align with the objective of the questionnaire? Are the questions sequenced (i.e., ranging from the general to the specific)? Do they have any conjunctions that may affect the clarity of what is being asked? Which response option is used? Are questions only asked once? Is each question necessary? Is the question formulated in an unbiased way?

Once the questionnaire is constructed and internally reviewed, both Bernhardt (2018) and Cohen et al. (2011) suggest piloting the tool to ensure that the questions are understandable by the intended stakeholder group, that the data generated is relevant and, as Bernhardt (2018) suggests, to ensure that it takes less than 30 minutes to complete.

However, once data is collected and analyzed, it is critical to communicate the findings to various stakeholders within the ecological education system (Bronfenbrenner, 1992), as the purpose is to help shift perceptions and to maintain momentum and motivation, to name a few. However, to do so effectively, a plan is necessary.

Plan to Communicate the Need for Change and Change Process

According to Damschroder et al. (2009), a clear communication process within an organization is an essential element towards a successful implementation endeavour. In addition, seamless communication provides increased engagement, which helps diminish some resistance of stakeholders during the change process, as they have a means to voice their concerns (Mei et al., 2004). Finally, participants' motivation towards the implementation process is enhanced when the message is tailored to its audience and when it explicitly highlights the benefits of the selected activity for the user (Choi et al., 2008; Mei et al., 2004).

These few elements underscore the importance and benefits of communicating throughout an implementation cycle. The following section considers *how to* enact these.

Communication as a Process, Not an Event

Since school leaders, teachers and staff already have very full workdays; the idea of a communication plan is not to "add to their plate", but rather, the intention is to simplify their implementation work from the outset. To achieve ongoing and seamless communication, a few conditions are needed, such as (1) working together from the start (Campbell, 2010; Hall, Lazarus, & Swannack, 2014); (2) building a trusting environment (Choi et al., 2008; Rockmann & Northcraft, 2008); and (3) ensuring that the messages provided are timely, applicable and meets the needs of the end user (Campbell, 2010; Hughes et al., 2008). Interestingly, these conditions are incorporated within the *Action-Driven Change Framework.* Specifically, the consultant requires that the school leader and an implementation team collaborate from the beginning of the change process. Furthermore, the trusting environment is promoted through the holding environment (Heifetz, 1994) and the *ALT Leadership Model*—through authentic relationships. As per the timely, applicable and relevant messaging related to the change initiative, such elements are at the core of the *Ideation Process* based on design thinking principles. In other words, the foundational elements towards communication are incorporated within the proposed change framework; thus, it is not adding more work for stakeholders. Rather, it is setting the stage for favourable communication throughout the change initiative.

How to Communicate? As the "stage is set" to promote effective communication throughout the change initiative, it is also important to think though how communication flows between stakeholders. As Rogers (2003) indicates, communication is a "process by which participants create and share information with one another in order to reach a mutual

understanding" (p. 18). This is particularly critical when individuals in the communication dyad are from different fields, such as education and mental health (Manojlovich et al., 2015). Thus, communication needs to be clear, concise and meaningful to the end user (Boies et al., 2015; Hall et al., 2014). Furthermore, while a high dose of credible content that captures the hearts and minds of stakeholders is key, the way the message is communicated is just as valuable, such as the tone, mannerism and body language (Mei et al., 2004). However, while how a message is articulated is critical, so too is the purpose of the message to be conveyed.

What is the Purpose? Similar to the process of creating a questionnaire, when planning a communication strategy, the change agent—internal or external—needs to think about their intended audience. Particularly, where they are situated within the ecological system (Bronfenbrenner, 1992; Dresler-Hawke & Veer, 2006) and what depth of knowledge is required for particular stakeholders (Figure 11). Specifically, is the communication meant to inform, to understand or to shift a behaviour? Based on this assessment, the method of communication differs. As Mei et al. (2004) suggest, if the goal is to shift behaviours, the communication targets a small group of individuals and is done in person (Manojlovich et al., 2015; Rogers, 2003). Whereas, at the other end of the spectrum, if the intent is to inform about the change initiative, the communication strategy can be brief and reach a broader audience. Between these two extremities, a wide variety of communication tactics exist.

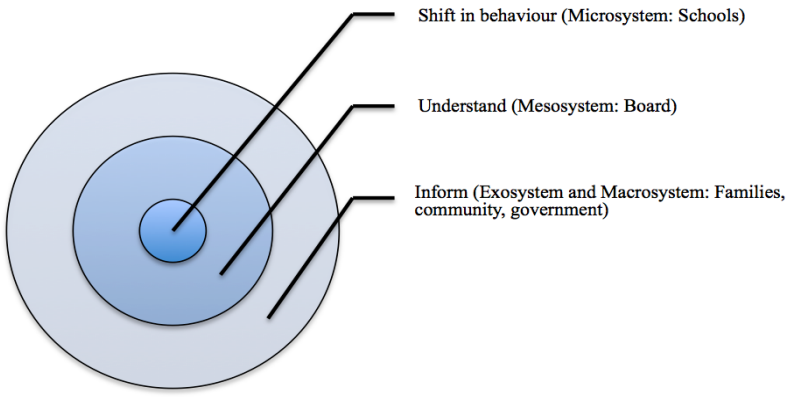

Figure 11. Communication needs according to Bronfenbrenner's (1992) ecological model.

Which Communication Tactic to Adopt? A wide range of communication options is possible, and the change agent needs to consider which tactic to use in order to translate their message to stakeholders. To help discern between the categories of tactics, Gagnon (2011) defines three broad knowledge exchange strategies. These include Push tactics: which occurs when the change agent disseminates knowledge to a targeted audience; Pull tactics: when users seek out knowledge to inform their decision-making; and finally Exchange tactics: where change agents and users work together to plan a dissemination process. According to the author, the latter is most effective when the exchange of ideas and information is done in an ongoing way.

Ultimately, communication is a helpful tool to ensure that the time, energy and resources spent on a change initiative spread beyond the core team responsible for the implementation process. Thus, if communication is done intentionally and explicitly, it is hypothesized that the proposed activities that support the change vision is understood and adopted by a variety of stakeholders within the education system. As such, a change in practice influences perceptions (Bernhardt, 2018), which promotes a sustainable shift towards the desired outcome. As such, a communication plan is needed.

Communication Planning

Communication strategies have many purposes and their messages are framed differently depending on who is instigating the communication process, who is the intended audience and what is the desired outcome. For example, a communication strategy initiated by a consultant that seeks to raise awareness about the importance of positive mental health practices may differ from an internally driven one. This is partly due to the difference in the type of networking relationship and access to various stakeholders within the education system. Furthermore, this variance can also be attributed to the type of data collected and used by the external and internal

change agents to inform and shape their messages to stakeholders. For instance, a consultant reviews the literature to highlight issues related to unaddressed mental illness for society, organizations, communities and individuals. They draw links on how these may affect school environments, specifically the effects on school administrators, staff and students. Furthermore, the research outlined the benefits of adopting a preventative approach for all stakeholders related to mental health—which is how the focus of adopting positive mental health practices at school came about. In contrast, rather than "reinventing the wheel", the internal change agent builds upon the consultant's research and collects and shares data that is pertinent to their context. This process relates to the "*What's the Story?"* quadrant of the *Action-Driven Change Framework* (Figure 12). While distinct, these two types of information sources are highly complementary in helping to tell a fulsome story of why promoting positive mental health practices is important. As a result, stakeholders are encouraged to lend their limited time and energy towards prioritizing their school's change initiative, which Kotter (1996) calls creating a "sense of urgency".

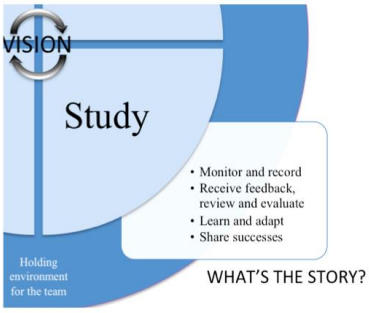

Figure 12. Action-Driven Change Framework: What's the Story?

As such, to help maintain the sense of urgency and to help stakeholders mobilize towards the proposed change, the communication plan (Table 16) is intended to aid the external change agent effectively support school leaders and their teams to promote sustainable mental health practices.

Table 16

Communication Plan

Strategy for Change	Influence sustainable change leadership practices through knowledge, resources and supports.					
Communication Goal	Enhancing stakeholders' uptake of a change process to meet their vision.					
	Specific Goal	Audience	Aim	Communication Tactics		Desired Outcomes & Monitoring
				Push	Pull	Exchange
Before	Communicate the benefits of adopting positive mental health practices at school and the value of a change process where the leader and their team are engaged from the start.	Superintendents School Leader School Staff	**Inform**	Information about the change process and targeted content related to positive mental health is provided. **Tactics:** Website Info sheet Videos	When stakeholders reach out to the consultant to learn more about the topic. **Tactics:** Email Phone	N/A	Stakeholders are informed about the benefits of addressing positive mental health at school and have knowledge about the value of a change process and engaging the school leader and their team from the outset. **Monitoring:** Website analytics Number of calls/emails New contracts

	Specific Goal	Audience	Aim	Communication Tactics			Desired Outcomes & Monitoring
				Push	Pull	Exchange	
During	Communicate in an ongoing manner to support a shift in practices and to support the implementation of the school's plan.	Superintendents	**Understand** Highlight the benefits for students, staff and school leaders.	Information to school staff about the process, content, role definition and expectations relative to the change initiative. Ongoing updates. Request for participation. **Tactics:** Existing school strategy. Toolkit. Info sheet. In-person meetings.	Engage with existing school teams that are interested in the topic of positive mental health practices. **Tactics:** Gather and share existing success narratives. Share through newsletters. Intranet.	Co-create vision, plan and prototype activities with those who are applying the interventions **Tactics:** In-person meetings. Prototyping. Existing school strategy. Intranet.	Stakeholders are well informed about the change process, roles, responsibilities and expectations. Stakeholders are aware of new activities; they are engaged in the process in a timely way; they provide feedback to the team. **Monitoring:** Communication methods are effective to draw in staff participants. Ongoing participation of the core team.
		School Leader and the implementation team	**Shift Practice** Consultant supports the initial change initiative cycle.				
		School Staff	**Shift Practice** Through engagement and *Learning Cascade.* Application of practice.				

	Specific Goal	Audience	Aim	Communication Tactics			Desired Outcomes & Monitoring
				Push	Pull	Exchange	
After	Schools communicate to stakeholders to maintain the focus on positive mental health practices and towards sustainable uptake of the change process.	Superintendents	**Understand** Share stories that highlight the successes and benefits for students, staff and school leaders.	Maintain standing item in team meeting and updates in existing strategies. Expand the sharing of successful practices beyond the school. **Tactics:** In-person meetings. Updates in existing structures. Conferences. Articles. Intranet.	Continue to gather and share success stories related to the plan. Consider creating or joining a *Community of Practice* (CoP) to gain and share knowledge, to maintain momentum. **Tactics:** Gather and share existing success narratives. Share—social media/other. CoP.	Adapt the plan to focus on new goals. Continue to gain feedback from the field. Maintain team meetings with school leader. Maintain technology platforms. **Tactics:** New change cycle. In-person meetings. Prototyping.	After the consultant completes their mandate, school leaders and their team maintain and broaden the communication strategies adopted in the initial implementation phase. **Monitoring:** Self-monitoring by schools to determine their progress i.e., are they achieving their desired outcomes from their action and communication plans.
		School Leader and the implementation team	**Shift Practice** Apply and scale up the change initiative cycle.				
		School Staff	**Shift Practice** Through engagement and *Learning Cascade.* Application of practice.				

Note. This communication plan overview is meant to be aligned with the implementation plan presented in Table 14. Specifically, the sections during and after the time where the consultant works with any given school.

While the communication plan provides a high level overview of what the consultant can do to inform stakeholders before, during and after the school's change process, it is important to highlight successes, gains and learning opportunities in an ongoing way. Rogers (2003) indicates that the diffusion of an innovation initially occurs when "early adopters" seek out information and knowledge. However, it is by observing the activity and gaining the favourable opinion of respected individuals, such as colleagues, formal leaders and/or opinion leaders, that persuasion of many individuals towards trying the intervention becomes possible (Cunningham et al., 2014). Therefore, to help with the engagement and adoption of the selected practice, it is key to articulate how the intervention is being used, what worked well and what did not. In addition, as previously stated, communication is an ongoing process, thus, if stories related to the change initiative are not being intentionality shared, the energy towards achieving the vision may fizzle. To prevent this from occurring, Ritchie (2013) suggests adopting implementation reminders, which act as communication prompts. For example, having a calendar reminder to add a progress note or a successful story in the weekly school email sent to all staff can help support an ongoing communication process. Richie (2013) also proposes to have a back-up plan in the eventuality that the communication plan did not quite meet its mark. Fortunately, since there is ongoing progress monitoring woven into the implementation plan and the change framework, the school and the consultant are able to readjust their proposed tactics quickly, thus helping to them achieve their desired aims and overarching outcomes. However, if all goes according to plan, what comes next?

Chapter and OIP Conclusions

The purpose of this chapter was to unpack the implementation, monitoring and communication plans related to the identified solution, which was to *create a toolkit with an*

aligned and differentiated learning offering, followed by implementation coaching support to school leaders and their team. This was to help address the problem of practice under investigation, which wondered what processes can an external change agent use to support school leaders and their teams move towards professional practices that promote positive mental health. Thus, this option was selected as it not only was within the sphere of influence of the consultant, but is also aligned with the focus areas which promote positive school mental health: capacity building and resources, implementation supports, and aligned leadership and structures. Furthermore, the toolkit was proposed as it offers a way to contextually address and resolve the consequences related to mental health issues rather than offering a "one size-fits-all" quick-fix solution, which does not exist. In addition, since the consultant is temporary in a school's change endeavour, the toolkit suggests a framework and processes that supports schools in finding and shaping their own solutions by building upon their school's existing strengths and knowledge.

While this OIP acknowledges that an external change agent can favourably influence positive mental health practices in schools through processes, learning and coaching support, there is always room to improve.

Next Steps and Future Considerations

In education, literacy, numeracy and other courses are offered and differentiated per grade level. The content within these subjects increases in depth and complexity as the student progresses through their academic journey. In this context, there is no question that the skills required to be successful in science, for example, requires time, patience, practice and support. This is also the case when considering a change initiative. To achieve a vision, many change iterations are necessary to build the structures and skills necessary for sustainble change.

Thus, it is through the lens of building and broadening skills related to both positive mental health practices at school and the sustainable adoption of the change model, that the fourth quadrant within the *Action-Driven Change Framework* asks, "*What's Next?"* (Figure 13).

To answer this question, the school leader and their team have the tools and data to make informed decision about their new short-term goal towards achieving their vision. For example, following a successful implementation cycle, does the school wish to add a new activity to their positive mental health practice repertoire? Do they want to broaden their reach and engage more school staff in the change process? Do they wish to focus their efforts in addressing dichotomies between practices and procedures so these align with the school's aim? Ultimately, no matter the next step chosen, it needs to be anchored to their vision. However, in the event that the vision has been achieved, because of the cyclical nature of the *Action-Driven Change Framework*, new opportunities are still available.

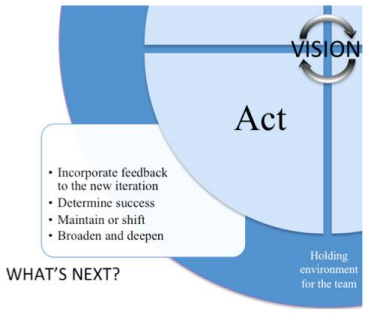

Figure 13. Action-Driven Change Framework: What's Next?

While it is within the role of the consultant to support schools in their problem-solving and decision-making processes related to their next steps, this question is also pertient to reflect upon as an external change agent. For instance, when considering the problem of practice that asks which processes can the external change agent use to effectively support schools move towards professional practices that promote positive mental health, the breadth of potential avenues for the consultant to explore is immense. Notably, immediate next steps could be to implement the proposed plans that are articulated in this OIP. Furthermore, the two other complementary solutions that were suggested could be further developed and implemented. The

purpose of this endeavour would be to field test these quality improvement processes and determine if they were in fact viable options.

In addition, as this OIP was a theoretical quality improvement process rather than a formal research (Tri Council, 2014), the various tools developed and added as appendices were not piloted, thus, they are not considered valid and reliable. As such, it is uncertain if these tools achieve their desired outcome. Moreover, while the *ALT Leadership Model* and the *Action-Driven Change Framework* stemmed from the literature, they have not been tested through the rigours of a formal research design. While these are major limitations to take into account, they present a great opportunity for the field, as other researchers can both test and refine the proposed tools, model and framework.

Finally, the unintended aim of this OIP was to highlight that within a change process, the responsibility of its success is not exclusively held by those who are in a positional leadership role, but rather, it is a shared, albeit different, responsibility. Similarly, as it takes a village to raise a child, one would argue that it takes a team to implement change!

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Appendix A

The ALT Leadership Model into Practice: Building Relationships Through Adaptive Leadership

The following suggestions are meant to help the external change agent to move professional relationships from being "strangers" towards a more "mature" rapport (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Once the relationship has developed to the latter part of the continuum, the external leader has the opportunity to apply *Transformational Leadership* approaches (Bass, 2008). Notice that the elements within *Area of Focus* are organized sequentially, building upon each other through the ALT leadership model. Note that these suggestions are iterative, therefore a leader can apply practices from earlier stages of the ALT model, even if the relationship has matured. Finally, *Adaptive Leadership** (Heifetz, 1994) and Rogers (1961, 1980) *core conditions*˚ are highlighted in the table.

ALT	Area of Focus	Suggested Reflection Questions and Activities
Authentic Leadership (Way of Being)	Self-Reflection˚	After a meeting/intervention, reflect upon how the situation unfolded. • What are some areas that you would have liked to do differently? • What are some aspects that others did that you can learn from? • What are some good components that occurred that you would like to replicate? • Are there new skills and/or knowledge needed to enact aspects you would like to adopt?

	Being Self-Aware˚	During a meeting/intervention, stay attuned to yourself as a leader and as a participant.
		• Were the adopted strategies previously self-reflected upon?
		• Is there intentionality in contributing positively towards creating a safe environment for all?
		• What are you feeling?
		  ○ If irritated, what is the source of this frustration?
		  ▪ Do others also seem to feel this way?
		  ▪ What can be learned from this situation?
		  ○ If you are pleased, what is the source of this emotion?
		  ▪ Is it something in particular that can be replicated in other circumstances?
		  ▪ What can be learn from this situation?
		  ▪ Do others also seem to feel this way?

LMX (Focused on Relationships)	Create a holding environment*˚	• Were clear expectations co-created for the meeting/team?
		  o Agenda setting/Purpose of the meeting
		  o Roles and responsibilities (for the meeting/team and/or side projects)
		  o Desired outcomes
		  o Goals
		  o Timelines
		• Was there time to connect with each other briefly on other topics that are of common interest?
		• Have the expectations related to confidentiality, respect of others and conflict resolution been discussed and/ reminded to participants?

	Communication Plan˚	• Was the purpose of the communication been determined (i.e., inform, understand, shift behaviours)?
		• Is the communication method aligned with the desired outcome?
		• Is the communication clear and concise?
		  o When working across boundaries (i.e., either between fields, external partners, internal departments…) are acronyms being explained? Are terms clearly explained and understanding by those attending the meeting?
		• Are conveyed messages tailored to the audience?
		• Have participants identified the topic as being important?
		  o Have participants been asked if they agree or disagree with the importance of this topic?
		• Have the benefits of addressing the proposed topic been highlighted?
		• Has there been resistance towards the topic? If so:
		  o Were the sentiment of resistance validated or was there a change in topic?
		  o Was there an exploration for the reasons behind the resistance?

	Communication Skills˚	• Was there a self-reflection on your communication style (tone, mannerism and body language)? o Do these help communicate effectively or are additional skills needed in this area? • Is the communication offered credible? Is the message reaching the hearts and minds of participants?
	Empathy˚	• Was a learning stance adopted during the meeting (i.e., ask questions rather than assume that the answer is known)? • Was their intentional eye contact, smiling and listening to others during the meeting?
	Listening˚	• After listening, was the message reformulate to ensure that it was well interpreted? • Do all participants who wanted to contribute have the space and voice to do so? As a facilitator, was this opportunity offered to all?

	Ask questions to permit participants to generate answers*	• Is the purpose of the meeting clear? Does the client know this? Was this remind to the individual/group prior to asking questions? • During the meeting, were participants asked to reflect upon their situation through prompting questions? • Prior to finding solutions, was there consensus on the vision? • Has the problem been identified? ○ Is the problem adaptive or technical? • When considering answers or potential plans, were participants asked for their ideas/thoughts? • If participants did not contribute their ideas, was there a facilitation process where they were able to generate their own innovative idea, or were they provided with external solutions? • Do proposed solutions address the main problem, or did participants veer off topic (i.e., towards activities that would be enjoyable, but that do not work towards resolving the issue)?
Transformational Leadership (Influence Change)	Idealized Influence	• Are you knowledgeable in the proposed topic? • Have you accumulated experience, knowledge, credibility and respect in a particular field?
	Inspirational Motivation	• Are participants reminded of the vision? • Are the strengths they are building from highlighted? • Are participants encouraged to highlight their achievements to date? • Are participants reminded of the benefits of the proposed work? • Is credit openly given to others related to their accomplishments?
	Intellectual Stimulation	• Are different opportunities to learn and grow made available? For example, are there new processes that participants are interested in? Are there areas within the field of interest that can be further explored? After a brainstorming session, are participants asked to review the literature to determine if their ideas have been done successfully—or not—in the past? • Are leadership opportunities offered within the group? • Are new creative ideas encouraged?
	Individualized Consideration	• Has a genuine interest been expressed towards individuals' lives/interests/goals? • Are opportunities related to participants professional interests and goals offered when possible?

Note. This is a theoretical tool developed for the purpose of this OIP. Further research would be required to ensure its validity and reliability.

Appendix B

An Ecological PESTE Analysis: Suggested Reflection Questions

Add the team's vision here:
Add the specific problem under investigation here:
*To be completed with Appendix C

PESTE Dimensions	Reflection Questions
Political	
Macrosystem	• Who are the current political parties nationally and provincially? • What is their current platform? • Are the federal and provincial political parties' priorities aligned or do they have conflicting views?
Why is this important?	This is important to know, as not all political parties view mental health as essential in the education sector. This may affect potential funding, and resource availability dedicated towards addressing issues related to mental health in general.
Exosystem	• Through a horizontal view (WHO, 2004), what are the political agenda and beliefs of community partners? • Are they in alignment and do they effectively contribute to the aspirational vision? • How so?
Mesosystem	• What are the political beliefs of key stakeholders within the school? ○ For example, is there a tendency towards *neoliberalism* (i.e., a focus on market-driven competitive advantage?)
Why is this important?	Knowing what the core beliefs of individuals within the exosystem and microsystem are, is pertinent, as this information helps shape how to engage a variety of stakeholders towards the proposed changes required to achieve their vision (Acton & Glasgow, 2015).
Microsystem	• Are there any political and/or personal dynamics within the inner and outer settings of the system that might impact the achievement of the desired outcome (Damschroder et al., 2009)? ○ Who are the key influencers? • Are they supportive of the vision or not? • Are there current practices in the school that already address the vision?

	○ Are these successful? ○ How do you know? ○ What are some challenges? • Are some practices well loved, but that do not produce the intended results? • Are there some people in the school who are reluctant to change practices?
Economical	
Macrosystem	• Does the federal and/or provincial political party offer funding and/or resources to address issues pertaining to mental health? • Do these funds come with explicit targeted outcomes? • Are these aligned with a preventative approach?
Exosystem	• Is your region and province experiencing economic growth or decline?
Mesosystem	
Why is this important?	This economic reality can impact student enrolment, which can in turn affect funding, staffing and workload (Pollock, 2016).
Microsystem	• What is the degree of poverty: ○ Within the community (e.g. was there a plant closed in a rural community which impacts the local economy?); ○ For families—thus impacting students; ○ For school staff.
*Sensitive Consideration	As this is a delicate topic, the intention is not to ask families, students or staff about their financial situation, but to simply be aware that financial distress is a risk factor for mental health issues (MHCC, 2013; Smetanin et al., 2011; WHO, 2004).
Social	
Macrosystem	• When considering the current political climate, is the overarching school culture (Bolman & Deal, 2013) favourable towards the topic of mental health and well-being? ○ If so, how do you know? ○ What are some enablers? ○ If not, what are some barriers?
Exosystem	
Mesosystem	• Is the school environment supportive towards the change vision?

	• Is it ready to work towards the vision (Appendix D)? • Is there a safe and trusting holding environment already in place (Heifetz, 1994) or does this need to be enhanced? • Are there indicators that demonstrate that stress and work-life conflict are affecting the school, either positively or negatively, such as: external relationships with families and the community; internal relationships between leader, staff and students; and the school's climate (Dimoff & Kelloway, 2013; Falecki, 2015; Pollock et al., 2014; Spilt et al., 2011). • Are there other contextual social elements that are enabling or impacting the *mesosytem*?
Microsystem	• Is there a dedicated internal leader who supports the vision? • Are there any known champions in your school who support the topic of mental health and well-being? • Are the formal and informal opinion leaders in favour of or against the initiative (Damschroder et al., 2009)? o Are they vocal about their position? • Is there any resistance? Either passive—refusing to participate—or active—voicing concerns—towards the vision (Mabin et al., 2001; Pardo del Val & Martínez Fuentes, 2003)?
Technological *Note.* While the topic of technology, from Cawsey et al.'s (2016) perspective relates mainly to the electronic aspect of the term, the following includes the concepts of supports, such as coaching, (Scaccia et al., 2015) and resources (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009).	

Macrosystem	• Do you know if there are resources available to support the vision at all levels of the education system?
	  o Can resources be redirected to support the vision?
	• Are there <u>some</u> resources available at <u>some</u> levels of the education system that would help support the aspirational vision?
	  o If so, what are these?
	• Are there technical supports available—such as coaching—to effectively address the topic of mental health for all (i.e., Tier 1)?

Exosystem	• Does the current technological system (i.e., software, data collection, service provision, etc.) enable collaboration between sectors or does it restrain it?
Mesosystem	• Is there an explicit or implicit expectation that school leaders and teachers/staff be perpetually available

	given the accessibility through computers and mobile devices (Pollock, 2016)? • Are there leadership and relational benefits in engaging with a millennial workforce through technology (Anderson et al., 2017)?
Microsystem	• Does ongoing accessibility through technological devices add to or reduce stress levels of individuals? • Does technology enable or limit the achievement of the vision—through online activities with students and staff for example? • What are some examples of successes and barriers in this area? • Are there sufficient learning opportunities—support and resources—to familiarize oneself with the proposed vision?
Ecological Unlike Bronfenbrenner's (1992) *Ecological Systems Theory,* which speaks to the various levels within a system, this dimension refers to the physical environment and the school community's social responsibility (Cawsey et al., 2016).	
Macrosystem	• Are events occurring locally at the *macrosystem* or *exosystem* levels, which impacts your school at the *mesosytem and microsystem* levels?
Exosystem	
Mesosystem	
Microsystem	

Note. The ecological PESTE analysis is adapted from *"*Organizational change: An action-oriented toolkit" by T.P. Cawsey, G. Deszca, and C. Ingols, 2016, Los Angeles: SAGE. *This is a theoretical tool developed by the present author. Further research would be required to ensure its validity and reliability.*

Appendix C

An Ecological PESTE Analysis Data Collection Template

Add the team's vision here:

Add the specific problem under investigation here:

PESTE Dimensions		Potential Barriers	Areas of Strengths
Political	Macrosystem		
	Exosystem		
	Mesosystem		
	Microsystem		
Economical	Macrosystem		
	Exosystem		
	Mesosystem		
	Microsystem		
Social	Macrosystem		
	Exosystem		
	Mesosystem		
	Microsystem		
Technological	Macrosystem		
	Exosystem		
	Mesosystem		
	Microsystem		
Ecological	Macrosystem		
	Exosystem		
	Mesosystem		
	Microsystem		

Appendix D
Initial Readiness Assessment Tool

Add the team's vision here:
Add the specific problem under investigation here:

Example of a vision: As a school and as professionals, we aim to intentionnally incorporate and promote daily positive mental health practices.
Individually, rate the following items as they related to the proposed vision, where 1 is "not at all" and 4 is "absolutely". These answers can vary depending on the ecological level i.e., are they considered at the individual, team or school level.

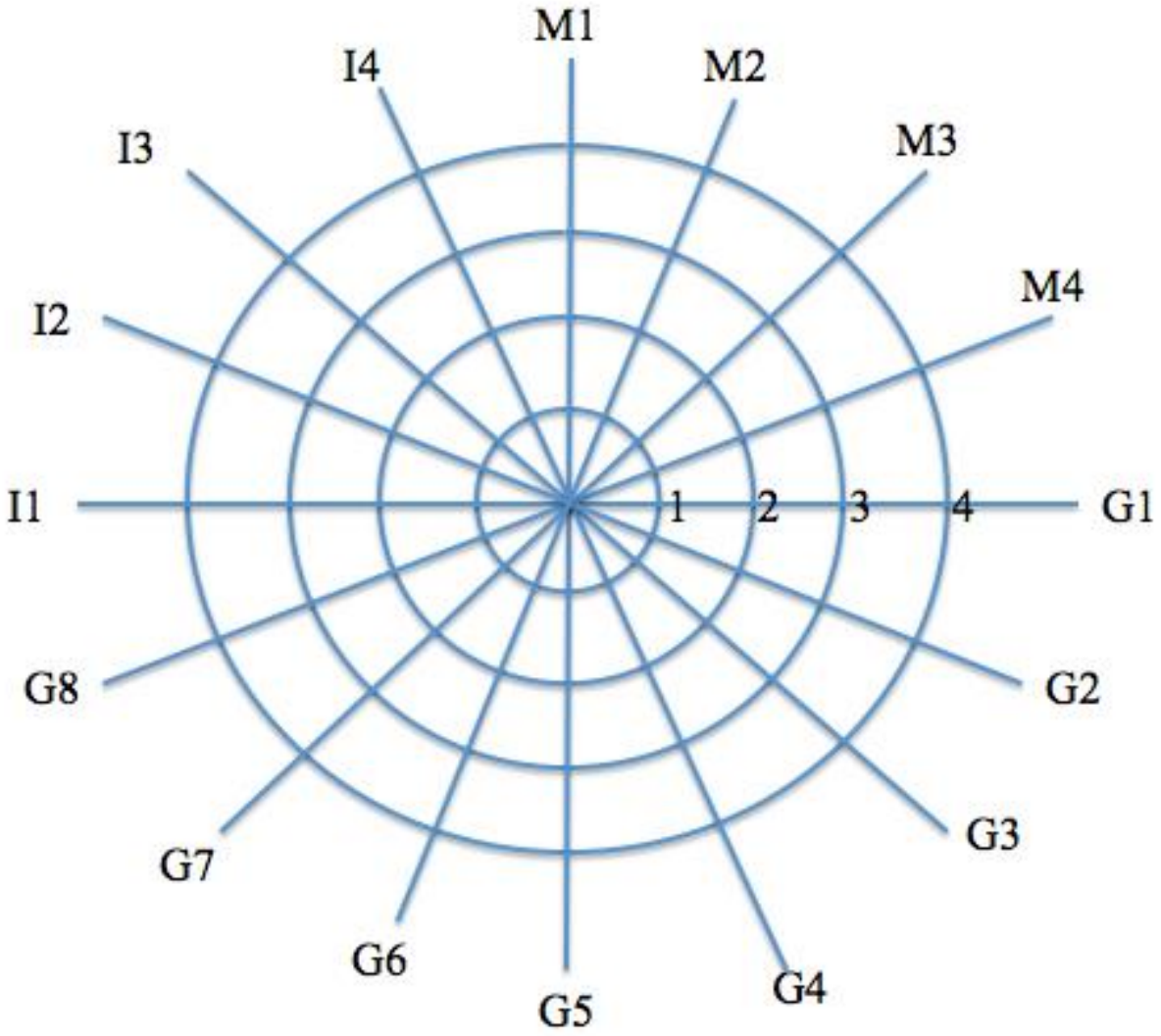
	Readiness (R)		Individual				Team				School			
	Motivation (M) – Degree to which the team wishes to achieve the vision.		1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
M1	Relative advantage	The vision is viewed as beneficial.												
M2	Compatibility	The vision aligns with the schools current values, beliefs and actions.												
M3	Complexity	The vision is perceived as simple to address.												
M4	Priority	The vision is viewed as a priority.												
	General Capacity (C) – The overarching context in which the vision is situated.		1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
G1	Culture	The vision aligns with "how things are done" at the school.												
G2	Climate	The team feels commited towards the school.												
G3	Organizational innovativeness	The school is open to change and creative ideas.												
G4	Resources	Resources can be accessed to achieve the vision.												
G5	Leadership	Leadership is supportive and involved in the vision.												
G6	Structure	We have effective communication and collaborative teams.												
G7	Staff capacity	There is enough staff to do the required daily work.												
G8	Process capacity	We have the internal ability to plan, implement and evaluate.												
	Innovation-Specific Capacity (C) – What is needed to achieve the vision?		1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
I1	Innovation-specific knowledge, skills, and abilities	The knowledge, skills and abilities needed to achieve the vision are sufficient.												
I2	Program champion/Internal change agent	A person can be dedicated to coordinate the vision. Champions can be identified.												
I3	Supportive implementation climate	Resources, processes and supports are available.												
I4	Interorganizational relationships	Internal team(s) are supportive of the vision.												

Note. This tool has been adapted to consider the initial readiness of a school towards achieving an aspirational vision. Thus, not all items are found in this list. Adapted from "*Readiness Building Systems: 2017-2018 Annual Progress Report on Organizational Readiness Research and Practice: Executive Summary*, by A. Wandersman and J. P. Scaccia, 2018, A division of the Wandersman Center, p. 28. Further research would be required to ensure the tool's validity and reliability.

Appendix E

Spider Chart: Initial Readiness Assessment Tool

With the data gathered in Appendix D, add the information to the chart provided. Use different colours to represent the answers related to the individual, team and school level. A similar process can be used to represent the aggregated data provided by a school team and their leader.



Note. This is a theoretical tool developed for the purpose of this OIP. Further research would be required to ensure its validity and reliability.

Appendix F

Brainstorming Session Template

What is the problem? To be framed as an open-ended question.

Narrative: The hypothetical story of someone with this problem.

Three criteria	Two constraints

Note. Adapted from "The Art of Innovation" by T. Kelley and J. Littman, 2001, New York, NY: Doubleday, Random House, and "Design Thinking: Driving Innovation Program", by D. Meister, 2018, personal course notes, London, ON: Ivey Business School.

Appendix G

Overview of Proposal 1

Proposal 1	Create a simple self-guided change leadership toolkit.	
What is the purpose of the proposal?	The purpose of the toolkit is to help structure the process of change. It is meant to establish a common language among stakeholder groups, add clarity, demystify and simplify the process towards change.	
How will this proposal enhance the motivation of participants? (Pink, 2011)	To help promote professional autonomy and competency through the learning cascade (Figure 6), the toolkit is initially supported and coached by the external change agent. The additional role of the consultant in this situation is to intentionally highlight the benefits of the vision throughout the process in order to add a sense of meaning to the change initiative.	
What needs to change?	Consultant level	The toolkit, which is either in print or online format, needs to be developed by the consultant based on research and vetted through a *rapid prototyping* exercise with a focus group. This is to ensure that the toolkit meets the pre-established criteria and constraints: does not take too much time, has a team approach, is fun, positive and simple.
	School level	Prior to reaching out to a consultant, a school first needs to acknowledge there is an issue to address and that a change process can help resolve it (Appendix D). After which, with the support of the consultant and toolkit, the school establishes a clear vision, goals, priorities, solutions and implementation plan.
What are the needed resources?	While this is a self-guided resource, to ensure that the toolkit is not left on a shelf collecting dust, the following criteria/resources are needed:	
	Team	A school leader and a team are needed to lead the change process from the outset.
	Time	While the process strives to be time sensitive, there still must be time dedicated towards it application.

		• Since time cannot be created, schools need to consider the removal/delegation of tasks or if they choose to incorporate the change framework within existing structures. • As a team approach is essential, the school leader needs to find ways to make this happen. For example, what time of day will this process occur to ensure maximum uptake: during the day (i.e., is release time be needed, or is scheduling need to be adapted?) or after hours (i.e., is food provided?). In both scenarios, money is required to support the team to enact the process (Appendices J & K).
	Learning	While the toolkit is meant to be self-directed, to ensure that participants feel competent and confident in applying the change framework, the consultant would initially support and coach the team (Cunningham et al., 2014), as per the *Learning Cascade*.
	Technology	If the tool is offered online, does the school have a strong internet connection that permits a team to access the resource—a potential issue with remote schools?
		Monitoring progress helps gather momentum and motivation; therefore, having a simple platform to collect data locally is essential.
Who is responsible?	Initial research and creation of the toolkit	Consultant
	Rapid prototyping	Focus group
	Application	School leaders and their teams
What are the benefits of this proposal?	For the user:	One of the challenges described by users is the lack of time. The benefit of the toolkit is its flexibility. Specifically, the content of the framework is simplified and available in print—or online. It allows for school leaders and their teams to learn about—and potentially apply—the process without needing to wait for an external change agent to support this portion of the learning. Another benefit of the toolkit is that it meets the needs of stakeholders, recognizing that they do not require the same level of

		support. Thus, for existing high-functioning teams, the toolkit could provide a simplified approach towards change, offer new activities or tools and/or simply provide a way to inform new staff or external partners about their process. Furthermore, it may not be needed at all. Thus, the principle of "one size does not fit all" applies to this solution.
	For the consultant:	One of the concerns faced by the consultant is that clients may not proceed in using the change framework once the external change agent has competed their mandate. Since the vision of the firm is to build sustainable change, the purpose of the toolkit, combined with coaching and support on how to use and integrate the approach, is to help school teams to weave in their daily practice, the ongoing amelioration process. The toolkit would aim to be flexible in addressing any desired change. Thus, incorporating this practice would become easier over time, as it could be applied elsewhere.
How will a *rapid prototyping* process help? (Liedtka & Ogilvie, 2011)	The purpose of a rapid feedback loop in this scenario is to help determine if the toolkit is relevant for the intended audience (i.e., school leaders and their teams); if it is easy to understand and simple to use; if the proposed activities are fun, build upon current strengths and meet their objectives; and finally, if the focus group believes that the suggested framework is relevant within the school structure. Following the feedback provided, the consultant would adapt the content accordingly. Focus group teams would then try to apply the toolkit in their contexts. Following their experience, they would again provide feedback to further ameliorate the resource.	

Note. The purpose of this table is to determine if this proposal is worth exploring in more depth in Chapter 3.

Appendix H

Overview of Proposal 2

Proposal 2	Facilitate a virtual community of practice that favours active support and ideas from others
What is the purpose of the proposal?	A community of practice (CoP) is a group of people who "share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis" (Wenger et al., 2002, p. 4). Thus, a CoP would help schools gather ideas and insights from others who are working towards a similar vision. To broaden the breadth of potential interaction, the proposed network would be facilitated through technological means, such as audio conferencing or video conferencing. This would permit remote and rural schools, which may be few and far apart, to also benefit from this valuable sharing experience. In other words, this collegial platform is a way to support an initiated change process in schools.
How will this proposal enhance the motivation of participants? (Pink, 2011)	To help promote professional autonomy, competency and a sense of meaning, an online platform could accompany the CoP, providing a way to store notes and resources developed by this group. Another feature that could be added to this web-based repository is an "ask your colleague" section. Here, participants could benefit from the ideas and experiences of others working towards a similar goal. This process would help add meaning to their work and enhance their sense of competency, as they are virtually supported by others in their field, albeit at different junctures of their journey. Furthermore, the CoP and online resource is also an opportunity for members to share their stories and visuals that highlight their local successes to inspire others in the process. The additional role of the consultant in this situation could be to facilitate the virtual gatherings and to act as a knowledge broker between members, thus acknowledging their autonomy and professionalism.

What needs to change?	Consultant level	For the CoP to be effective, schools within the province need to be aware of the group and its platform and see the benefit of using it. Thus, the consultant and/or the firm would need to reach out to schools to first asses the appetite for such a community. To demonstrate the added value of this approach, the consultant needs a prototype of the web-based platform to offer a visual of what is proposed. The consultant would also highlight that the resource is meant to be evergreen (i.e., to be constantly added to according to stakeholders preference and needs). However, prior to showing a virtual mock-up of the platform, it would be vetted through a rapid prototyping exercise to ensure that it meets the pre-established criteria and constraints. For example, the platform does not take too much time, it values a team approach, is fun, positive and simple to navigate. The consultant would also ensure that the CoP has a specific topic area to help guide the conversation, such as: how schools are achieving their vision of creating professional practices that promote positive mental health.
	School level	CoP's are common in education, thus, participants would be familiar with the approach and would understand the benefits of such a professional community. However, to engage meaningfully in a CoP, participants need time to join in synchronistic sessions, reflect about what was learned and have the opportunity to share with their colleagues and try new approaches. Furthermore, leaders and their teams would need to ensure that the CoP is aligned with their vision and is an integrated part of their planning.
What are the needed resources?	While a CoP is a professional community that builds on individuals' interests, motivation and knowledge, there are enablers to consider, such as:	
	Alignment	It is useful to align the benefits of this learning group to the vision, goals, problems and solutions. This intentionality helps team

		members to get the most out of the CoP meetings and platform.
	Team	A school leader and a team are needed to lead the change process from the outset. Therefore, all who are involved in the initiative are invited to participate and contribute to the CoP.
	Time	Time is needed to participate in the synchronistic sessions. However, as the platform offers a space to ask questions that can be answered at a later time, the resource is flexible to the user's needs.
	Technology	As the CoP is offered online, if the school does not have a strong internet connection, it limits the use of the resource—such as participating in "live" meetings. However, there is still an opportunity to access the archived materials and submit questions in the "ask a colleague" section.
Who is responsible?	Initial research and creation of the draft web-based repository	Consultant
	Networking and communication to add participants to the CoP	Consultant and users
	Rapid prototyping	Focus group
	Application	School leaders and their teams
What are the benefits of this proposal?	For the user:	A benefit of this solution is that it can inspire other leaders and team members towards the successful application of a change process that supports their vision. They also have an opportunity to ask honest questions related to the topic, such as: • Please share how you were able to integrate the change framework in your existing structures, so the endeavour does not feel like an add-on. • How did you bolster team motivation when the change has been occurring for some time?

		Furthermore, this platform, which has both a real-time and offline features, is flexible to people's schedules and acknowledges that not all stakeholders require the same level of support. Thus, schools that are further along in their change leadership process could use this platform to help others in their field to overcome issues that they have encountered on their journey.
	For the consultant:	The benefit of this solution for the consultant is it addresses the concern that stakeholders may not maintain the change process once they have completed their mandate. However, introducing schools to this group while they are still offering direct service helps the school leader and their team to see the value in the resource, and will have become familiar with it. Furthermore, as the facilitator of the meetings and online resource, the consultant is able to support the ongoing application of the change framework.
How will a *rapid prototyping* process help? (Liedtka & Ogilvie, 2011)	The purpose of a rapid feedback loop in this scenario is to create a CoP web-based platform that is meant to be relevant for the intended audience (i.e., school leaders and their teams) in an ongoing way (i.e., evergreen). The focus group would initially provide feedback on its ease of use, engaging platform, stimulating content and respect for team members' time. Following the feedback provided, the consultant would adapt the content accordingly. However, as the CoP wishes to stay current and relevant, the facilitator would ask for feedback after each synchronistic session and would have a "feedback" tab available online. Thus meeting the purpose of perpetually refining the resource in question.	

Note. The purpose of this table is to determine if this proposal is worth exploring in more depth in Chapter 3.

Appendix I

Overview of Proposal 3

Proposal 3		Build upon existing structures and see if/how they can align with the change process.
What is the purpose of the proposal?		The purpose of this activity is to help school teams identify if there are current structures that would lend themselves to support the change framework. The idea of this exercise is to build on existing strengths and practices within the school so the perspective of adopting a new approach does not seem to be a hurdle to overcome. Participants would be able to view this change process as an added value to their existing context rather than an "add-on".
How will this proposal enhance the motivation of participants? (Pink, 2011)		To enhance the motivation of the school leader and their team is to build upon what is known. The premise of this solution is tailoring the change framework to existing teams or structures, as opposed to the other way around. This approach would thus recognize the work being done. Individuals would be valued for their professional autonomy and would feel competent, as the process is included within a situation with which they are familiar. However, the consultant needs to intentionally highlight the connection between the change framework and the vision in order to add a sense of meaning to the process.
What needs to change?	Consultant level	This solution requires that the consultant support the school to map their existing structures and determine which of these would lend themselves most naturally to the change process. An analysis would then determine what the current practices utilized are and if they have similarities with the framework—an activity similar to the one featured in Table 5. Tools supporting this process would be developed. Once completed, the school leader, their team and the consultant would assess how to prune and layer the framework to their context so it feels like a contextual fit for them.

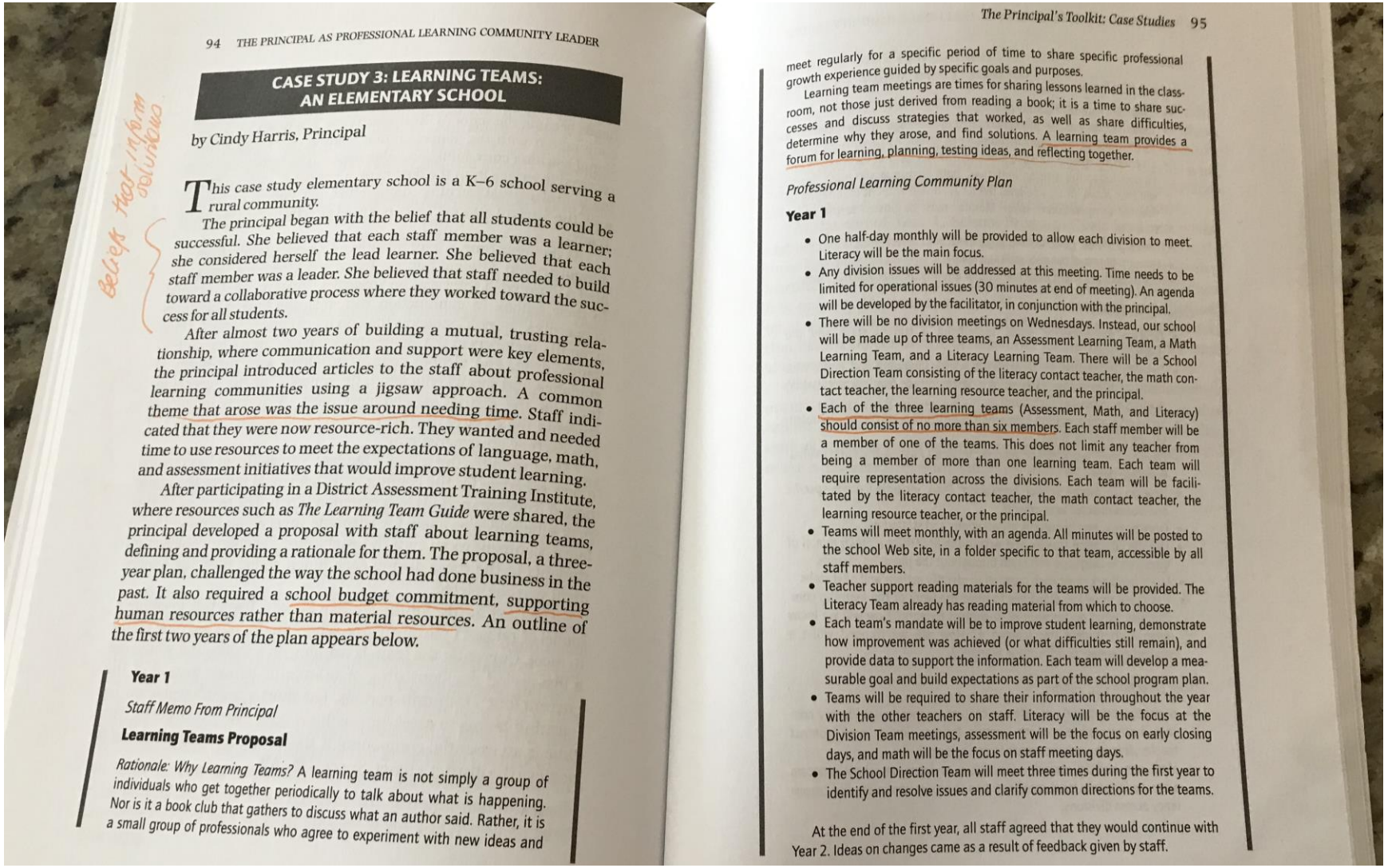
		This solution requires a bit of upfront work from the school and the consultant to assess the existing structures, to determine which would be a good fit and to tailor the framework to meet the team's needs. However, once the existing structure is decided upon, the work is to build upon what is known.
	School level	A challenge for the group could be to stay focused on the newly revised vision. For example, if a professional learning community is used to focus on student academic achievement, trying to add a goal related to positive mental health for all might seem like a forced fit for some. Therefore, in the selection piece, individuals within the structures would be asked to consider if a "merger" would work in their setting or not.
What are the needed resources?	While this solution builds on existing structures, there are a few considerations to take into account, such as:	
	Team	A school leader and a team are needed to lead the change process from the outset. Thus, a team within the existing structure needs to be engaged with from the start.
	Time	While the solution is meant to limit the burden of time, as a new team structure has not being created, time is still needed to do the upfront analysis and merging of the framework and the existing practices. However, once this upfront work is completed, additional time requirements may be limited—unless the team participates in learning communities such as a CoP to enhance their knowledge in the area of interest.
	Learning	To feel confident and competent with the new vision, team members may need some additional learning opportunities, which also requires time and financial resources.
Who is responsible?	Initial assessment of existing structures	Consultant and/or school leader and their team
	Rapid prototyping	Identified school team
	Application	School leaders and their teams

What are the benefits of this proposal?	For the user:	The main benefit of this approach is to "dig where the ground is soft" meaning that schools work from familiar structures and adapt the framework to their particular context.
	For the consultant:	This process of building upon existing structures is beneficial as it reduces the perception that the change framework is an add-on. Thus, the motivation to maintain the process once the consultant is no longer there seems favourable.
How will a *rapid prototyping* process help? (Liedtka & Ogilvie, 2011)	The rapid feedback loop in this scenario would be co-created between the consultant and local school teams, since the framework is locally adapted. The process would first work to adapt and layer the change approach to the existing structure. Once the theoretical layering is done, the team puts their idea into practice and determines if any adjustments are required. If modifications are needed, the team proposes new ideas and tries them again. This cyclical process of refining their team process also serves the purpose of applying the framework, thus becoming more familiar and comfortable with it. The team would also consider whether the adapted framework is easy to understand and simple to use within the new context; if the activities are still fun; if they are able to meet their objectives, and finally, if the team believes that the suggested framework is relevant for their school.	

Note. The purpose of this table is to determine if this proposal is worth exploring in more depth in Chapter 3.

Appendix J

Case Study 3: Finding Time



CASE STUDY 3: LEARNING TEAMS: AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

by Cindy Harris, Principal

This case study elementary school is a K–6 school serving a rural community.

The principal began with the belief that all students could be successful. She believed that each staff member was a learner; she considered herself the lead learner. She believed that each staff member was a leader. She believed that staff needed to build toward a collaborative process where they worked toward the success for all students.

After almost two years of building a mutual, trusting relationship, where communication and support were key elements, the principal introduced articles to the staff about professional learning communities using a jigsaw approach. A common theme that arose was the issue around needing time. Staff indicated that they were now resource-rich. They wanted and needed time to use resources to meet the expectations of language, math, and assessment initiatives that would improve student learning.

After participating in a District Assessment Training Institute, where resources such as *The Learning Team Guide* were shared, the principal developed a proposal with staff about learning teams, defining and providing a rationale for them. The proposal, a three-year plan, challenged the way the school had done business in the past. It also required a school budget commitment, supporting human resources rather than material resources. An outline of the first two years of the plan appears below.

Year 1

Staff Memo From Principal

Learning Teams Proposal

Rationale: Why Learning Teams? A learning team is not simply a group of individuals who get together periodically to talk about what is happening. Nor is it a book club that gathers to discuss what an author said. Rather, it is a small group of professionals who agree to experiment with new ideas and

meet regularly for a specific period of time to share specific professional growth experience guided by specific goals and purposes.

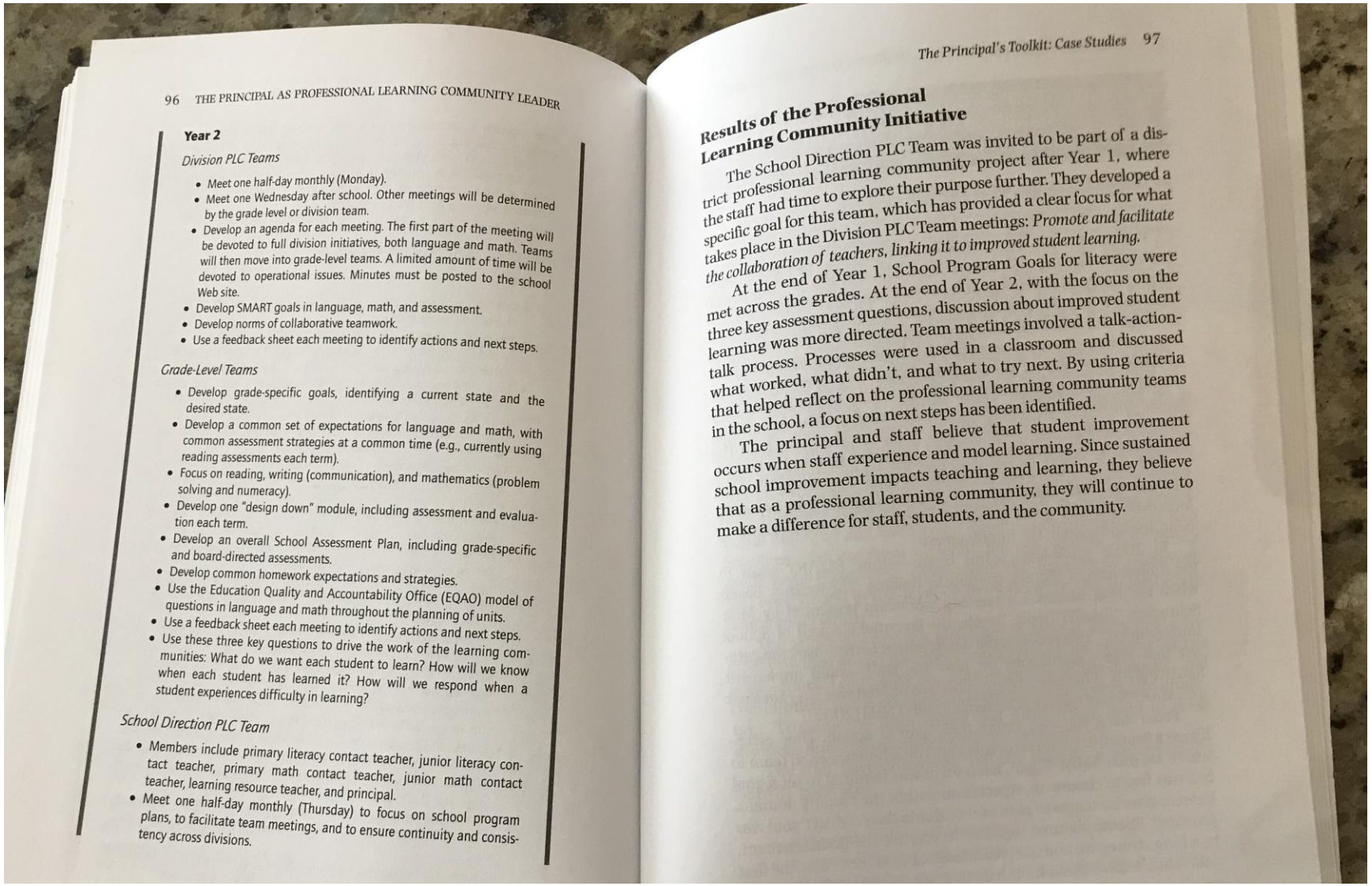
Learning team meetings are times for sharing lessons learned in the classroom, not those just derived from reading a book; it is a time to share successes and discuss strategies that worked, as well as share difficulties, determine why they arose, and find solutions. A learning team provides a forum for learning, planning, testing ideas, and reflecting together.

Professional Learning Community Plan

Year 1

- One half-day monthly will be provided to allow each division to meet. Literacy will be the main focus.
- Any division issues will be addressed at this meeting. Time needs to be limited for operational issues (30 minutes at end of meeting). An agenda will be developed by the facilitator, in conjunction with the principal.
- There will be no division meetings on Wednesdays. Instead, our school will be made up of three teams, an Assessment Learning Team, a Math Learning Team, and a Literacy Learning Team. There will be a School Direction Team consisting of the literacy contact teacher, the math contact teacher, the learning resource teacher, and the principal.
- Each of the three learning teams (Assessment, Math, and Literacy) should consist of no more than six members. Each staff member will be a member of one of the teams. This does not limit any teacher from being a member of more than one learning team. Each team will require representation across the divisions. Each team will be facilitated by the literacy contact teacher, the math contact teacher, the learning resource teacher, or the principal.
- Teams will meet monthly, with an agenda. All minutes will be posted to the school Web site, in a folder specific to that team, accessible by all staff members.
- Teacher support reading materials for the teams will be provided. The Literacy Team already has reading material from which to choose.
- Each team's mandate will be to improve student learning, demonstrate how improvement was achieved (or what difficulties still remain), and provide data to support the information. Each team will develop a measurable goal and build expectations as part of the school program plan.
- Teams will be required to share their information throughout the year with the other teachers on staff. Literacy will be the focus at the Division Team meetings, assessment will be the focus on early closing days, and math will be the focus on staff meeting days.
- The School Direction Team will meet three times during the first year to identify and resolve issues and clarify common directions for the teams.

At the end of the first year, all staff agreed that they would continue with Year 2. Ideas on changes came as a result of feedback given by staff.



Year 2

Division PLC Teams

- Meet one half-day monthly (Monday).
- Meet one Wednesday after school. Other meetings will be determined by the grade level or division team.
- Develop an agenda for each meeting. The first part of the meeting will be devoted to full division initiatives, both language and math. Teams will then move into grade-level teams. A limited amount of time will be devoted to operational issues. Minutes must be posted to the school Web site.
- Develop SMART goals in language, math, and assessment.
- Develop norms of collaborative teamwork.
- Use a feedback sheet each meeting to identify actions and next steps.

Grade-Level Teams

- Develop grade-specific goals, identifying a current state and the desired state.
- Develop a common set of expectations for language and math, with common assessment strategies at a common time (e.g., currently using reading assessments each term).
- Focus on reading, writing (communication), and mathematics (problem solving and numeracy).
- Develop one "design down" module, including assessment and evaluation each term.
- Develop an overall School Assessment Plan, including grade-specific and board-directed assessments.
- Develop common homework expectations and strategies.
- Use the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) model of questions in language and math throughout the planning of units.
- Use a feedback sheet each meeting to identify actions and next steps.
- Use these three key questions to drive the work of the learning communities: What do we want each student to learn? How will we know when each student has learned it? How will we respond when a student experiences difficulty in learning?

School Direction PLC Team

- Members include primary literacy contact teacher, junior literacy contact teacher, primary math contact teacher, junior math contact teacher, learning resource teacher, and principal.
- Meet one half-day monthly (Thursday) to focus on school program plans, to facilitate team meetings, and to ensure continuity and consistency across divisions.

Results of the Professional Learning Community Initiative

The School Direction PLC Team was invited to be part of a district professional learning community project after Year 1, where the staff had time to explore their purpose further. They developed a specific goal for this team, which has provided a clear focus for what takes place in the Division PLC Team meetings: *Promote and facilitate the collaboration of teachers, linking it to improved student learning.*

At the end of Year 1, School Program Goals for literacy were met across the grades. At the end of Year 2, with the focus on the three key assessment questions, discussion about improved student learning was more directed. Team meetings involved a talk-action-talk process. Processes were used in a classroom and discussed what worked, what didn't, and what to try next. By using criteria that helped reflect on the professional learning community teams in the school, a focus on next steps has been identified.

The principal and staff believe that student improvement occurs when staff experience and model learning. Since sustained school improvement impacts teaching and learning, they believe that as a professional learning community, they will continue to make a difference for staff, students, and the community.

Ontario Principals' Council. (2009). *Professional learning community leader.* Leading student achievement series. pp. 94-97. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press
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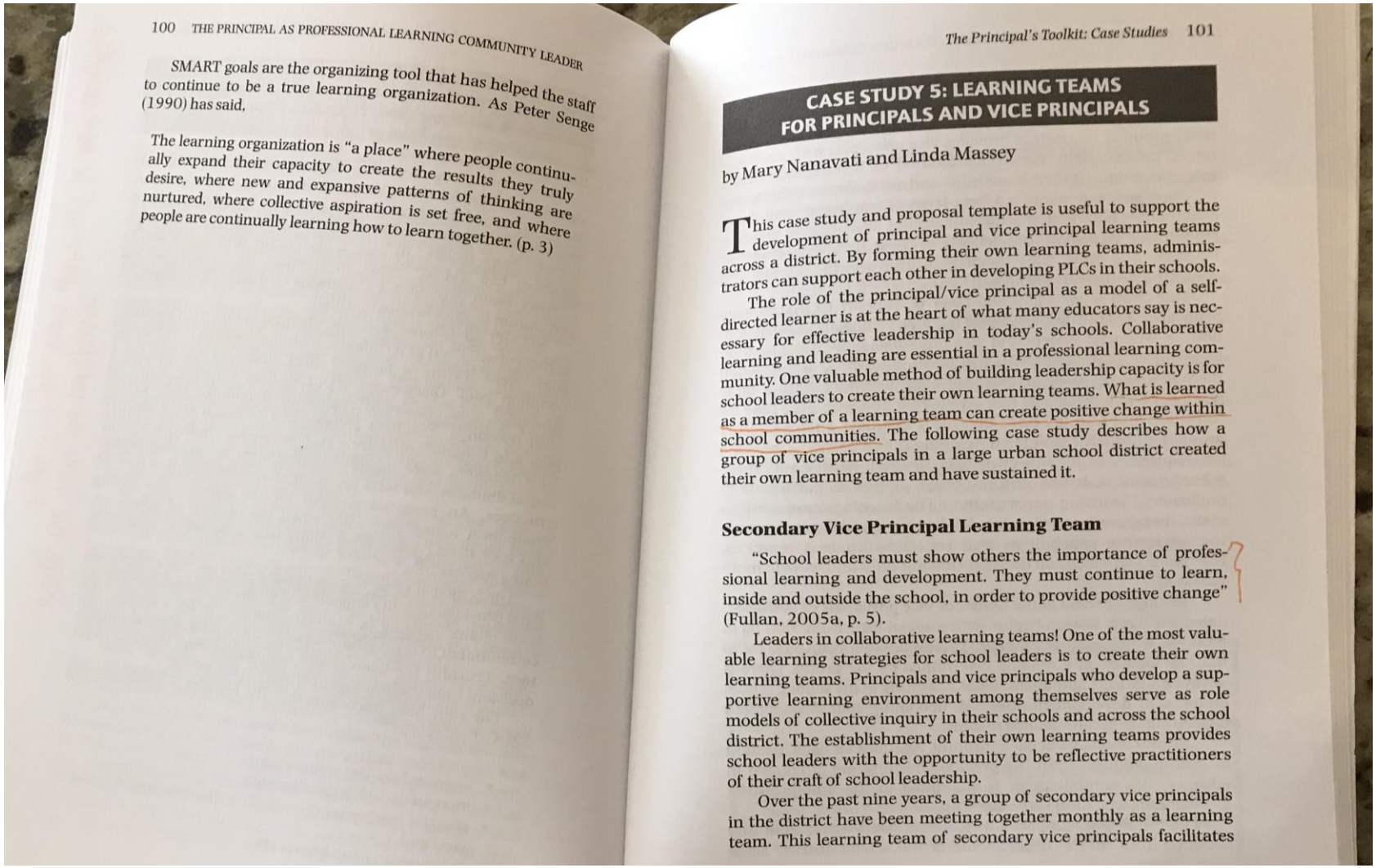
Appendix K

Case Study 5: Building a Business Case



SMART goals are the organizing tool that has helped the staff to continue to be a true learning organization. As Peter Senge (1990) has said,

> The learning organization is "a place" where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together. (p. 3)

CASE STUDY 5: LEARNING TEAMS FOR PRINCIPALS AND VICE PRINCIPALS

by Mary Nanavati and Linda Massey

This case study and proposal template is useful to support the development of principal and vice principal learning teams across a district. By forming their own learning teams, administrators can support each other in developing PLCs in their schools.

The role of the principal/vice principal as a model of a self-directed learner is at the heart of what many educators say is necessary for effective leadership in today's schools. Collaborative learning and leading are essential in a professional learning community. One valuable method of building leadership capacity is for school leaders to create their own learning teams. What is learned as a member of a learning team can create positive change within school communities. The following case study describes how a group of vice principals in a large urban school district created their own learning team and have sustained it.

Secondary Vice Principal Learning Team

"School leaders must show others the importance of professional learning and development. They must continue to learn, inside and outside the school, in order to provide positive change" (Fullan, 2005a, p. 5).

Leaders in collaborative learning teams! One of the most valuable learning strategies for school leaders is to create their own learning teams. Principals and vice principals who develop a supportive learning environment among themselves serve as role models of collective inquiry in their schools and across the school district. The establishment of their own learning teams provides school leaders with the opportunity to be reflective practitioners of their craft of school leadership.

Over the past nine years, a group of secondary vice principals in the district have been meeting together monthly as a learning team. This learning team of secondary vice principals facilitates

A learning team of vice principals would facilitate critical inquiry into key questions of interest to vice principals and, at the same time, provide another means for professional growth in support of school and system goals and priorities. A study group of this nature would provide vice principals with a collaborative, professionally supportive method of investigation and a means to augment their knowledge and skills. Because this model involves a relatively long-term commitment with direct classroom/school/system experimentation and ongoing dialogue among vice principals, the benefits to those involved—students, teachers, and other staff members within specific schools and across the system—would be significant.

A learning team for secondary vice principals would be a layer of support in addition to that already being provided by the board and the Vice Principals' Association. Both experienced leaders and vice principals new to the position would benefit from participation on a learning team. At a time when there is a shortage of experienced administrators, with a large number of vice principals new to the role and with little time for transition and training once the role is assumed, such a support group would be especially helpful in developing the professional learning and leadership of all vice principals involved. Participants would share school practices, issues, and resources, as well as professional learning opportunities.

Benefits for Vice Principals Involved in Learning Team

- Vice principals are supported in terms of time and resources for professional learning.
- Vice principals are empowered to expand practices and to solve professional dilemmas in times of mandated changes to curriculum and operating procedures.
- Vice principals are provided with opportunities to deepen their knowledge and skills.
- Vice principals new to the role are given an opportunity to dialogue and develop a network of support in the presence of more experienced colleagues.

Benefits to Schools, Including Teachers and Students

- Implementation of school-based initiatives in keeping with district and school goals and priorities
- Professional growth of vice principals that mirrors and supports ongoing, in-school professional development
- Continued fostering of a culture of inquiry and reflection with positive impact on schools
- Students benefit from application of learning—an expected outcome of this project

Benefits to School District/System

- Ongoing, systemwide professional development
- Development of a system-based resource team
- Support for new and experienced vice principals interested in professional dialogue and inquiry

Process and Time Lines

Prior to June 200_, a study group of vice principals interested in pursuing an inquiry process of professional growth will be formed. This group will have specified resource needs and determined areas of investigation by the end of October 200_.

A summary of target dates includes the following:

- **Date:** _____—Information to vice principals (Monthly Association Meeting) and distribution of invitation
- **Date:** _____—Information session for potential participants to clarify membership purpose and establish possible areas of professional inquiry
- **Date:** _____—First meeting of learning team group to finalize purposes and processes; establish meeting dates, locations, and rotating chairs for 200_–200_ school year; identify resources needed; and discuss professional development opportunities and goals
- **Dates:** _____—Learning team continues to meet on a monthly basis.

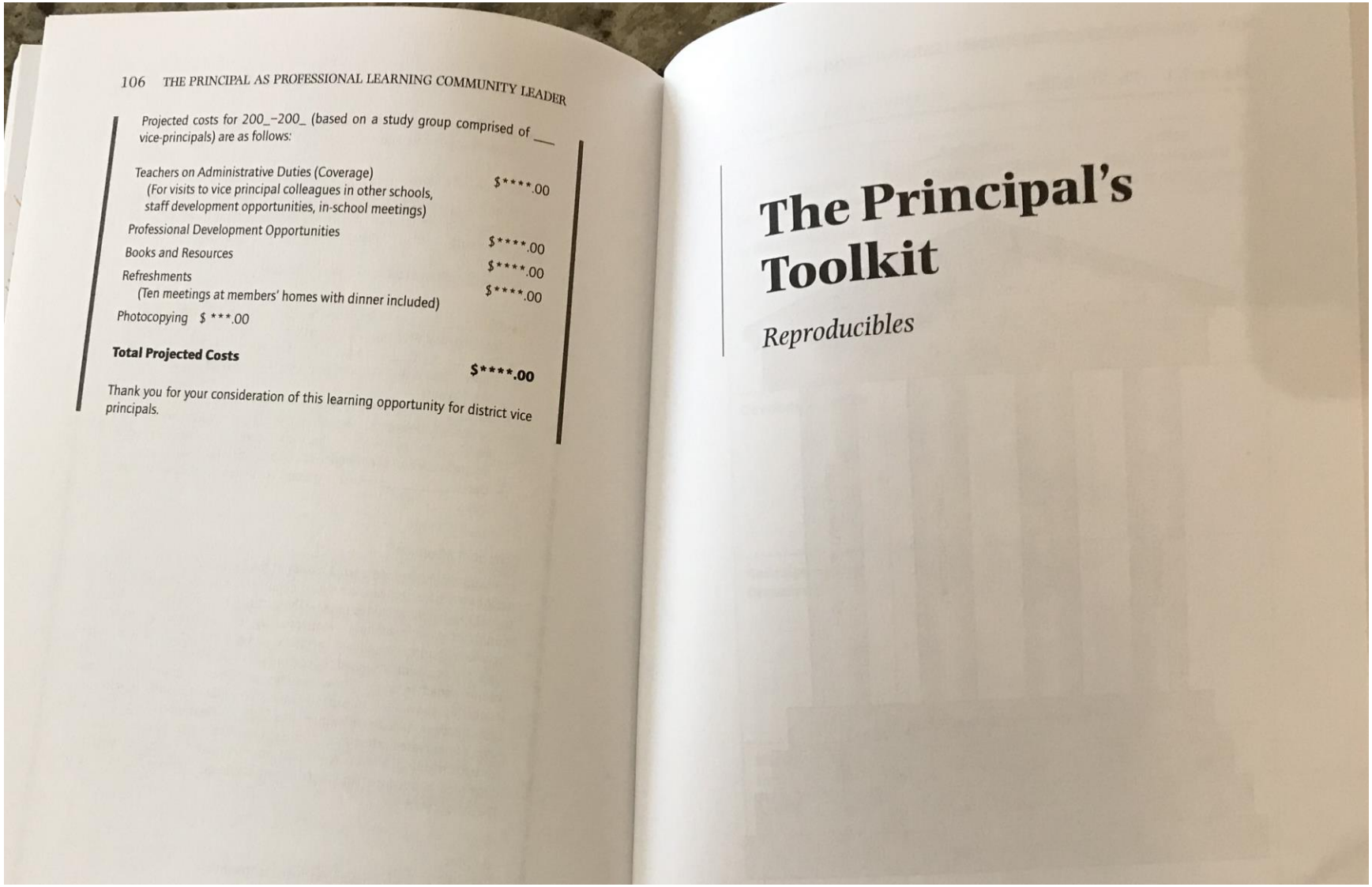
Format of Meetings

Meetings would be held once a month at the homes of vice principals or a designated site. Each session would begin with a social time from 5:00 PM to 6:00 PM, which includes dinner. The discussion from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM would focus on a reading determined by the group and would always include a sharing component (what's working at my school, school issues, staff development attended, upcoming staff development opportunities, recommended reading). These sessions will assist members to navigate leadership challenges, to expand leadership capabilities, and to reflect on best practices. Discussions would also focus on decision-making skills and ways to motivate staff. Minutes for each meeting would be taken. Agendas for each meeting, as well as minutes from the previous meeting, would be circulated in advance. An annual report would be submitted at the end of the school year.

Budget

Potential sources of funding include the following:

- Secondary Vice Principals' Association
- District Program Services
- District School Services
- Superintendent of Schools



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Projected costs for 200_–200_ (based on a study group comprised of ___ vice-principals) are as follows:

Teachers on Administrative Duties (Coverage) *(For visits to vice principal colleagues in other schools, staff development opportunities, in-school meetings)*	$****.00
Professional Development Opportunities	$****.00
Books and Resources	$****.00
Refreshments *(Ten meetings at members' homes with dinner included)*	$****.00
Photocopying $ ***.00	
Total Projected Costs	**$****.00**

Thank you for your consideration of this learning opportunity for district vice principals.

The Principal's Toolkit

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