

6-29-2019

## Academic Advising in a Personalized Learning Environment

Stephen Poplar  
spoplar@uwo.ca

Follow this and additional works at: <https://ir.lib.uwo.ca/oip>



Part of the [Educational Leadership Commons](#), and the [Higher Education Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Poplar, S. (2019). Academic Advising in a Personalized Learning Environment. *Dissertation in Practice at Western University*, 98. Retrieved from <https://ir.lib.uwo.ca/oip/98>

This Dissertation/Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by Scholarship@Western. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Dissertation in Practice at Western University by an authorized administrator of Scholarship@Western. For more information, please contact [wlsadmin@uwo.ca](mailto:wlsadmin@uwo.ca).

Academic Advising in a Personalized Learning Environment

Stephen J. Poplar

Faculty of Education

University of Western Ontario

Organizational Improvement Project

Doctor of Education Requirement

2019

### Abstract

Guidance counselling in Canadian secondary schools today is coming under greater pressure. There are more students experiencing mental health issues, which impact their wellness. Student wellness demand has an impact on the ability of guidance counsellors to provide deep and meaningful academic and post-secondary advising for students. This OIP will look at one Independent school in Canada, ICS, and how it is experiencing the same shift in student's wellness that demands counsellor's attention. ICS is also undergoing a transformational change to a personalized learning environment as the predominant teaching and learning model. Such a shift requires transformational leadership and provides an opportunity for the school's Student Guidance Centre to align with the personalized learning philosophy and apply it to academic advising and post-secondary decision-making. The school's mission demands that academic advising and decision-making are priorities for the school counsellors in their work with students toward their post-secondary choice. Ultimately, post-secondary decisions need to be deeper and more meaningful for students, which will drive the change required. This leads to the Problem of Practice. *In a personalized learning environment framework, what are the factors/conditions that deeply impact the post-secondary decisions of students?* Academic advising and post-secondary decision-making involve a variety of guidance processes throughout secondary school. These various processes require attention and movement away from the status quo and traditional methods that are currently in place. Various options for change are outlined but focuses on one change aspect, a new personalized online Careers course. The student will be at the centre of teaching and learning in the course.

Keywords: guidance, personalized learning, academic advising, post-secondary decision-making, deep learning, transformational leadership.

## **Executive Summary**

Guidance counsellors in high schools across Canada are experiencing an increase in mental health and student wellness issues (Hamlin, Hagen, & Watkins, 2016). These issues combined with the numerous other tasks asked of counsellors by the education system have left academic advising and post-secondary decision-making support for students lacking. High school students are left to make the most important decision of their life, what to do after high school, on their own. In most cases they are making a sufficing decision that lacks depth. This OIP looks at one institution and how it may change this important decision-making process for its students.

ICS (anonymized) is a small 30 plus year old K-12 Canadian private school. ICS has experienced steady growth and is now well established in its region. The school has a new vision for personalized learning in an effort to make education more relevant for students. With this there is an opportunity for the Student Guidance Centre (SGC) to change to align with the new vision. Currently, the SGC at ICS provides a traditional information-providing model of post-secondary support for students. Throughout high school ICS students are provided with information at pre-determined points that help lead them through the decision-making process. Information is provided in-group or personal meetings with the student or grade and they have little input as to when and how it is presented to them.

This organizational improvement plan (OIP) looks to implement an academic advising plan within a personalized learning environment that will change the post-secondary decision-making model for students. The plan will align the SGC with the overall mission and personalized learning vision of the school. It looks to make the student more motivated and the driver behind their decision-making. The use of technology will be a major component of the OIP as the solution must be innovative and include current digital realms.

Transformational leadership is foundational to the shift in culture from a traditional teaching and learning environment to a personalized one. First-order transformational leadership amongst the Head and Senior Leadership provide the vision for change (Bass, 1999). It is the second level transformational leadership of the organization, or amongst the teachers that is paramount in making this educational and cultural change occur (Hallinger, 2003). Educators, teachers and counsellors, must be motivated, build capacity and collaborate within the school to make significant change occur (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006) However, the environment also has to include students in the collaborative process as part of the impetus for personalized learning (Zmuda, Curtis & Ullman, 2015).

The Congruence Model will be used to establish the alignment of the academic advising and post-secondary decision-making process for students (Nadler & Tushman, 1999). The environment that students find themselves in today has changed vastly and the structures of guidance are still traditional in nature (Nadon, 2014). In Nadler and Tushman's (1999) terms this leaves the SGC out of alignment with today's students and the predominance of their digital world. The SGC has not adapted its work processes for this change.

ICS is an educational institution, an elementary and high school, and in such it would benefit from a change model that is aligned with education. Fullan and Quinn's (2016) Coherence Framework provides a process for leadership in a school to process change. It focuses on four different components, creating collaborative cultures, focusing direction, securing accountability and deepening learning. The aspect of deepening learning is also a main component of personalized learning (Zmuda et al., 2015). The alignment of the Coherence Framework (Fullan & Quinn, 2016) with the philosophy of personalized learning is important for this OIP because of the change to a personalized learning model. The Competing Values

Framework (Cameron & Quinn, 2011) has been provided as a tool to monitor the cultural shift that is also occurring. The Head values a supportive relationship environment where teachers are the creative risk takers needed to change how we teach and learn in a personalized learning model.

There have been four possible solutions proposed to this OIP. The status quo is not an option, as the SGC needs to align with the new vision of a personalized learning environment. The other three solutions are stand-alone options in their own right. However, in total they provide a complex process for academic advising in a personalized learning environment. To implement all three solutions at the same time would take resources that are currently outside the scope and agency of this OIP. However starting with one solution and doing it well could establish the precedent for moving forward incrementally with the other solutions. The preferred solution for this OIP is to implement a dynamic Grade 10 personalized online Careers course.

This OIP provides the theoretical basis for change at ICS. However, the OIP has started to gain traction. Elements that have been introduced at the time of writing are internal and external accountability, collaboration with teachers and outside agencies, technology platform discussions, and the establishment of a five-year plan. The progression for this OIP is outlined and includes, solidifying the five-year plan, map the curriculum, initiate communication plan and most importantly getting students on board. In the overall personalized learning model student input in how to best present and develop this course is crucial. Continuous improvement in developing and understanding what factors will lead to a deeper and better post-secondary decision for students is the commitment of this OIP.

### **Acknowledgments**

My partner for the last 36 years, Kathy, is the person deserving the most credit for this work. I have undertaken my four post-secondary degrees since we were wed 32 years ago. She has always supported my passion for education and has been extremely patient with the entire process. She is highly supportive and an incredible person who knows exactly when to not take me seriously.

This process is all about family. I understand that I am fortunate to have the opportunity to do this degree and by no means translate to being the smartest person. My parents, long since departed, each had grade eight education and raised ten healthy children. Of my siblings, only two others achieved formal post-secondary degrees, both Master's. But of the next generation, thirteen people, all have achieved post-secondary success, something to which my parents would be proud. I hope this degree spurs the family on to more education, that is my legacy. Although my siblings are wonderfully supportive, my sister Marg has always been there for me in my educational journey. She was the first to set the bar by going to university and getting her degree and becoming an excellent educator. During my first degree, she purchased my textbooks and a winter coat for me when I could not afford it. Through unconditional love she supports my current efforts and lets me know that I can do it when doubt sets in.

Outside of my family My Head of School has been terrific in their support, as have my colleagues. Picking up some pieces when I needed to focus on my work. They are all wonderful, caring, educators. Finally, my advisor, Professor Scott Lowrey, thank you for pulling me through.

I think this is my last degree. The first was for my partner, the second was for a job and a better life for my children; Taylor and TJ, the third degree was for my parents; this degree is for me, finally, doing something for myself; my personalized learning.

**Table of Contents**

<b>Abstract.....</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>Executive Summary .....</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>Acknowledgments .....</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>Table of Contents .....</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>List of Tables .....</b>	<b>x</b>
<b>List of Figures.....</b>	<b>xi</b>
<b>Acronyms .....</b>	<b>xii</b>
<b>Chapter 1 Introduction and Problem .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXT .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>STUDENT GUIDANCE CENTRE (SGC) .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>MISSION, VALUES AND VISION .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>LEADERSHIP POSITION AND LENS STATEMENT .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>LEADERSHIP PROBLEM OF PRACTICE .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>FRAMING THE PROBLEM OF PRACTICE.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>PESTE ANALYSIS .....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Parent perspective .....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Student perspective .....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Counsellor perspective.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Administrative perspective.....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>GUIDING QUESTIONS EMERGING FROM POP.....</b>	<b>22</b>



<b>LEADERSHIP FOCUS VISION FOR CHANGE .....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Educational change theory - Coherence Framework .....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Cultural change theory – Competing Values Framework .....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>SGC LEADERSHIP FOCUS .....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE READINESS .....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Chapter 2: Planning and Development.....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>LEADERSHIP APPROACH TO CHANGE .....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Leadership from the Head.....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Leadership at many levels .....</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>FRAMEWORK FOR LEADING THE CHANGE PROCESS.....</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Model for academic advising.....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>School counsellors as leaders.....</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>CRITICAL SGC ANALYSIS.....</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>Time .....</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>Influencers.....</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>The process of post-secondary decision-making .....</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>Possible Solutions to Address POP.....</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>SOLUTION 1: STATUS QUO .....</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>SOLUTION 2: PERSONALIZED ONLINE CAREERS COURSE .....</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>SOLUTION 3: IMPLEMENTATION OF A GRADE 11 GUIDANCE COURSE.....</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>SOLUTION 4: COMPREHENSIVE PERSONALIZED ACADEMIC ADVISING LEARNING</b>	
<b>ENVIRONMENT.....</b>	<b>62</b>

<b>Leadership Ethics and Organizational Change Issues .....</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>Chapter 3: Implementation, Evaluation and Communication .....</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>CHANGE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS.....</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>The personalized online Careers course.....</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>ICS REQUIREMENTS FOR CHANGE.....</b>	<b>74</b>
<b>STAKEHOLDER REACTION TO CHANGE .....</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>Teacher compensation/motivation.....</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>Students and meaningful stakeholder relationships .....</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>TECHNOLOGY AS A RESOURCE AND IMPLEMENTATION ISSUE.....</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDER COLLABORATION.....</b>	<b>82</b>
<b>ABC online school .....</b>	<b>82</b>
<b>ICS alumni .....</b>	<b>83</b>
<b>CHANGE PROCESS MONITORING AND EVALUATION .....</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>PLAN-DO-STUDY-ACT CYCLE .....</b>	<b>89</b>
<b>Assess .....</b>	<b>94</b>
<b>Plan .....</b>	<b>94</b>
<b>Develop .....</b>	<b>95</b>
<b>Reflect.....</b>	<b>95</b>
<b>PLAN TO COMMUNICATE THE CHANGE AND THE CHANGE PROCESS .....</b>	<b>96</b>
<b>CONCLUSION: NEXT STEPS AND FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS.....</b>	<b>102</b>
<b>Next Steps.....</b>	<b>102</b>
<b>Future Considerations .....</b>	<b>103</b>

**References ..... 105**

**Appendix A ..... 115**

**ICS SCHOOL ORGANIZATIONAL CHART ..... 115**

**Appendix B ..... 116**

**CONGRUENCE MODEL..... 116**

**Appendix C ..... 117**

**COHERENCE FRAMEWORK ..... 117**

**Appendix D ..... 118**

**ICS CURRENT ACADEMIC AND POST-SECONDARY SUPPORT PROCESS ..... 118**

**Support for students..... 118**

**Expectations of the student..... 118**

**Expectations for parents. .... 118**

**Appendix E ..... 119**

**COHERENCE ASSESSMENT TOOL..... 119**

**Appendix F ..... 120**

**ONTARIO FOCUSED INTERVENTION PARTNERSHIP ..... 120**

**Appendix G..... 121**

**MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION – OFFICE OF DISTRICT AND SCHOOL**

**TURNAROUND, “THEORY OF ACTION” MODEL ..... 121**

**List of Tables**

Table 1	Determinant in Students’ Post-Secondary Decision-Making .....	52
Table 2	Possible Solutions .....	65
Table 3	ICS Five-Year Plan for Online Course .....	76
Table 4	Monitoring and Evaluation .....	86
Table 5	Change Communication Plan Outline .....	101

**List of Figures**

Figure 1	Combined representative diagram of the leadership model and preferred cultural shift at ICS.....	27
Figure 2	ICS personalized post-secondary advising model .....	40
Figure 3	A schematic depiction of the legal and ethical hierarchy in provincial private school education systems in Canada.....	66
Figure 4	Online personalized Careers course depiction.....	73
Figure 5	Improvement process for online personalized careers course .....	91
Figure 6	PDSA example for ICS to be used in the monitoring and evaluation of the online personalized careers course .....	94

### **Acronyms**

OIP – Organizational Improvement Project

POP – Problem of Practice

ICS – anonymized school name

SGC – Student Guidance Centre

SLT – Senior Leadership Team

GAP – a year away from formal education immediately after secondary school graduation

PESTE - Political, Economic, Social, Technological, and Environmental

MFE – Meaningful Faculty Evaluation

CAIS – Canadian Accredited Independent Schools

ABC Online School – anonymized online partner school

OFIP – Ontario Focused Intervention Partnership

MDoE – Massachusetts Department of Education

PDSA – Plan, Do, Study, Act

## **Chapter 1 Introduction and Problem**

Counselling in schools across North America is in crisis. One of the greatest concerns for secondary school guidance counsellors in schools today is the amount of work they are being asked to do and how effectively they are able to do it in light of the issues presented by adolescents. Studies show that psycho-social/emotional support for students has moved to the forefront and left academic advising and post-secondary placement lacking. (Hamlin et al., 2016; Johnson, Rochkind, Ott, Amber & DuPont, 2010; Ontario College of Teachers, 2018; Savitz-Romer & Liu, 2014). This Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP) will look at one small Canadian private school, ICS (anonymization applied), and how its counsellors can propose develop and introduce a personalized learning framework for post-secondary decision-making and measure its success. The question developed for the problem of practice is as follows. In a personalized learning environment framework, what are the factors/conditions that deeply impact the post-secondary decisions of students?

### **Organizational Context**

ICS is a relatively young Independent school, established over 30 years ago with one class in a religious institution basement (Anonymous, 2018a). Today, ICS is a K-12 educational institution with its own wonderful facility that houses over 740 students. ICS is located outside a major metropolitan area and employs about 120 people, mostly educators, although it also employs other professionals who administer to the business aspects of the school. ICS is granted authority to operate as a private school by the Provincial Ministry of Education following the private schools' policy and procedures manual, which mandates conditions for inspection (Anonymous, 2013).

By definition, Independent schools are a form of private school. Independent schools are not-for-profit and are governed by an elective Board of Governors (The Board) (Canadian

Accredited Independent Schools, 2018a). The Board follows strict governance and professional development guidelines. They operate within the laws of the Education Act within their respective provinces, but they also meet external accountability for rigorous accreditation standards. The term Independent school is used by many private schools across Canada that wish to distinguish themselves as having a higher academic standard as well as being not-for-profit and of charitable standard. The provincial government does not fund private or Independent schools and the school operates by charging tuition to families whose children attend the school. CAIS espouses the expectations for Independent schools by which ICS operates, “Parents of CAIS schools can expect the best” (Canadian Accredited Independent Schools, 2018b).

The role of a religious institution was paramount in the establishment of ICS. It was in the 1970s that the core vision of a school was instituted as outlined in an internal school memorandum by the then advisory group (Anonymous, 2018a).

Several people have approached us with the idea of sponsoring a private school in this area, which would have as its core objectives:

- (1) A structured traditional school environment.
- (2) Emphasis to be placed on a competitive academic environment based on sound religious teachings. (p. 2)

Enrollment grew quickly from a single kindergarten class in a church basement to a K-12 institution that moved to its own current site after the 1970’s. ICS continues to honour the vision of the school founders and to uphold the principles they set forth. While it remains true to its religious traditions, ICS welcomes members of all faiths and has a very diverse student body.

### **Organizational Structure**

The school has a hierarchical leadership structure as can be seen in the organizational chart for the school (Appendix A). The Board consists of between 15 to 20 volunteers, mostly



current parents, who oversee the long-term viability of the school under a Board Chair. The Board sets the strategic direction for ICS, enabling the school to focus on core initiatives, while ensuring its long-term sustainability (Anonymous, 2018b). The Board hires the Principal or Head of School, (The Head) who runs the day-to-day operations. The Head is the Principal of the school as required by Provincial Ministry of Education (Anonymous, 2013). (As a counsellor at ICS, an inclusive environment, working with diverse people, the gender pronouns used in this document will be they/them/ their.) It is this legislative requirement of accountability that institutionalizes hierarchical structures in schools. In collaboration with the Head, the Board determines the school's policies and priorities, and oversees all financial and administrative functions. Recently, a new Head was hired at ICS and is introducing new ideas and vision for the school. There was a short turnaround in the position as the last Head left suddenly after five plus years at the school.

The Head is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the school. They are the only employee hired by the Board and are responsible for the hiring of all other personnel within the school. They work with a school leadership team (SLT) in a distributed model of leadership (Bolman & Deal, 2013). Although the Head has the highest position in the school, and has certain responsibilities by law under the provincial education act, in this distributed model, the Head needs an organization that is fast and flexible, collaborative and decentralized.

The SLT manages the day-to-day operations of the school (Anonymous, 2018b). It acts as an advisory group, and includes a number of Directors who work together to set objectives, identify issues, resolve conflict, implement changes, and evaluate staff and faculty performance. Samples of director areas of responsibility at ICS are human resources, finance, advancement, academics, student life and technology. As an example, the Finance Director monitors the accounting functions of the school as a business and all the legal financial requirements of a non-

profit entity under the Canada Revenue Agency. The Finance Director collaboratively plans with other SLT members for future growth at ICS and the financial implications of such growth. Each member of the SLT is responsible for setting the school's tone, and upholding the principles of leadership, confidence, integrity and respect within the ICS community at large. The SLT leads by a collaborative exchange between their position and their direct reports. The SLT leadership is not contextual and situated in the leader but in the collaboration between the leader and constituents or direct reports (Bolman & Deal, 2013).

The school is divided into three divisions, lower school, middle school and senior school, each with a Director who guides and provides leadership for that division. The Provincial Ministry of Education inspection gives provincial secondary school diploma granting permissions to ICS. It is from Grade 12 that students graduate and move to post-secondary options in life. The guidance counsellors at ICS work primarily in the senior school and are responsible for the social emotional well being of students and their post-secondary decision-making. (Counsellor is the Canadian spelling and will be used primarily in this document. Counselor is American spelling and will be used when American works are referenced. The terms guidance counsellor and counsellor will be used interchangeably.)

### **Student Guidance Centre (SGC)**

ICS' Student Guidance Centre (SGC) is similar to a guidance department in the public education system. The SGC aims to help students acquire and develop the skills, knowledge and attitudes required to understand and grow themselves as people, relate to others effectively, develop applicable education plans and explore career alternatives (Anonymous, 2018b). Counsellors in the SGC, like at many schools, are dealing with more student issues and complexities in the counsellor role (Hamlin et al., 2016; Nadon, 2014, Ontario School Counsellors Association, 2018). These issues relate to student mental health and wellness.

The SGC as a department and its identity has changed with the growth of ICS. When the school first started there were no counsellors or SGC, one counsellor was hired when the school expanded as a high school. That one counsellor's primary responsibility was for university decision-making support to satisfy the school's mission for university readiness. The aim of the SGC has expanded beyond its original role and now offers much more than university counseling (Anonymous, 2018b). It now provides learning services to identified students, as well as social emotional support and referrals to community organizations for students or families in need. Over time the Centre has changed to address the increase in demands from students. Currently, it has a Director who reports to the Director of Academics, three counsellors at the high school level and three learning services specialists. The SGC must also align with the overall mission and vision of the school and specifically in supporting students with their post-secondary aspirations and preparedness for university.

### **Mission, Values and Vision**

The mission statement is critical to ICS and guides the school's actions and decisions. In effect ICS' mission statement commits to excellence in education with a focus on character and personal honour in the appreciation of religious values. The school was often measured by its output or specifically student preparedness for university, which is the critical part for this OIP. This output traditionally implied that ICS, as a preparatory school, had all its students, 100%, achieve university acceptance. However, the term preparedness for university was misconstrued from what the advisory group had originally constructed. It is aspirational that ICS students are prepared for university but the SGC now allows for individual guidance based on the variety of possibilities available after secondary school.

This OIP will focus on post-secondary decision-making for students. It is most likely the most important decision that students will make to that point in their lives. ICS incorporates three

post-secondary possibilities, two of which involve further formal education at university or college and the other involves a GAP year or year away from formal education. A GAP year is a time for exploration, when young people could explore their self-awareness, work or volunteer activities, or travels to better understand the world and its cultures (American GAP Association, 2018). The SGC has changed in supporting multiple post-secondary options for students however, most ICS students' still look toward university as their next step.

It is the change in vision of the school that drives this OIP. The Head, in collaboration with the Board, has instituted a vision toward a personalized learning environment and away from traditional teacher centred methods of teaching and learning. There are three main pedagogical movements toward more student focus, individualization, differentiation and personalization. Individualization is premised on the notion that each student works at a different pace whereas differentiation relates to the preferred learning style of each student (U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Technology 2010). Both individualization and differentiation require adaptations of pedagogy and curriculum but are still teacher centred models. Personalized learning includes both pace and preference but also includes student interests and varying methods, objectives and content (U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Technology 2010). At ICS personalized learning is defined as “a progressively student-driven model in which students deeply engage in meaningful, authentic, and rigorous challenges to demonstrate desired outcomes” (Zmuda, et al., 2015, p. 7). The purpose of this change is to make the educational experience for ICS students more relevant to the 21<sup>st</sup> century in which they will live and work. Given that currently 100% of students from ICS go to university the move to a personalized learning environment represents not only an educational risk but also a business one. To overcome the risk the Head is moving toward a transformational leadership model.

## **Leadership Position and Lens Statement**

The SGC follows the hierarchical leadership model of the school as the Director reports to the Academic Director. The SGC is collaborative between counsellors and with teachers and students. As a counsellor I report to the Director of the SGC and it is from this position as a counsellor that I attempt to lead change in the department and school.

The new Head is using transformational leadership in shifting the educational construct of the school to a personalized learning environment. The foundational transformational leadership work of Bass (1999) is relevant to educational leadership and this OIP. Transformational leadership relates to three things, getting people focused on specific and idealized goals, getting followers beyond their own self-interests for the sake of the team, and moving followers to address the higher-level needs (Bass, 1999). Northouse (2016) defines transformational leadership as a process that changes and transforms people. “It is concerned with emotions, values, ethics, standards and long-term goals. It includes assessing followers’ motives, satisfying their needs, and treating them as full human beings.” (p. 161). Changing from a traditional model of education at ICS to a personalized learning environment is about satisfying the needs of the students and motivating teachers and students in the new teaching and learning process while building solid human relationships.

Adapting Bass’ (1999) hallmarks of a transformational leader to an educational context provides for the background of leaders needed to make the change at ICS. These hallmarks align well with personalized learning and the ethical standards of teaching and counselling. Following are ways the hallmarks align with personalized learning and the ethical standards of teaching and counselling:

- Encourages the motivation and positive development of students and educators

- Exemplifies the legal and moral standards of educators and encourages the same of others
- Fosters an ethical school environment with clear values, priorities and standards.
- Builds school culture by encouraging educators to move from an attitude of self-interest to a mind-set where they are working for the common good of students
- Holds an emphasis on authenticity, collaboration and open communication
- Provides coaching and mentoring but allowing educators and students to make decisions and take leadership toward change.

The Head at ICS is demonstrative of these transformational hallmarks and now it is upon the educators at ICS to do the same. The Head prefers the collaborative nature of transformational leadership, as they understand that the teachers and counsellors must enact the change in the educational setting (Hallinger, 2003). This is supported by transformational leadership research in education.

Leithwood and his associates relate transformational leadership to the realm of education (see Leithwood, 1992; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006; Leithwood & Sun, 2012). They state that effective educational organizations will emphasize participative decision-making throughout the organization. This relates to a cultural power shift in educational organizations where work is more “consensual” and “facilitative” in nature (Leithwood, 1992, p. 9). Leithwood (1992) uses the term facilitative power to describe the collective ability of school staff to solve school problems and achieve aspirations (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006). The educators, the teachers and counsellors, must do the work to change the school to a personalized learning environment as they hold the power and capacity to make effective change happen in the school (Leithwood & Sun, 2012). “Such power arises, for example, when teachers are helped to find greater meaning in their work, to meet higher-level needs through their work, and to develop enhanced instructional

capabilities.” (Leithwood, 1992, p. 9) As we are asking students at ICS to find deeper and greater meaning in their work, it would seem intuitive to have teachers and counsellors do the same?

There are three variables that are critical for teacher performance in the transformational model: motivation, capacity and work settings (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006). This aligns with the collaborative component of school improvement of the Coherence Framework (Fullan & Quinn, 2016), which is explored in this OIP. This facilitative or collaborative power in educators is aimed at enhancing the learning experience of the student, which is definitive of a personalized learning environment (U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Technology 2010; Zmuda et al., 2015). It is in the capacity building of the teachers and counsellors to develop the envisioned personalized learning environment that presents a potential risk for this OIP. That is why it is vital for the teachers and counsellors at ICS to become transformational leaders in their own right and not rely on hierarchical models (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006).

The importance of transformational leadership in this OIP is that it relates to the second-order target for change (Bass, 1999; Hallinger, 2003; Leithwood, 1992) The first-order catalyst for change is the Head who determined the change path for the school toward a personalized learning environment. They communicated the vision and are demonstrative in their transformational leadership toward those goals. But they cannot do all the work toward change that needs to be done by the teachers and counsellors within the school. In effect it is this second level that must undertake the collaborative transformational role of making the difference in teaching and learning. It is the role of the Head to give adequate support to the teachers and counsellors in making the change happen (Leithwood & Sun, 2012). This is transformational work needed at ICS.

The work as counsellors at ICS, as transformational second level leaders in this OIP, conveys to the academic advising of students and their post-secondary decision-making success.

There is a macro and a micro approach to transformational leadership in this OIP for the SGC and counsellors. At the macro level the SGC needs to transform its processes as a department and provide school wide leadership to align with the new vision of the school. Examples of macro level leadership for counsellors are using data to identify school counseling goals, be advocates for both students and teachers, increase collaboration amongst stakeholders, emphasize accountability and embrace systemic change (American School Counselor Association, 2019).

The research suggests that students are choosing less complex decision-making strategies for post-secondary choices (Govan, Patrick & Yen, 2006). At the micro level the SGC needs to provide personalized academic advising in a collaborative effort alongside students. This defines personalization in the context of guidance counselling, as it provides the opportunity for students to be better motivated to make a deeper post-secondary decision. The SGC is unsure if our students at ICS are highly motivated in regards to their post-secondary decisions, as we have never asked. Subjectively, counselors at SGC believe that students appear less knowledgeable and less able to articulate why they make the choices they do in regards to their post-secondary options. This presents the opportunity for the SGC to move toward a personalized environment and to be seen as transformational leaders.

Historically counsellors have not been seen as leaders in education. The nature of work done by counsellors was in support of the students and not seen or demonstrative of school leadership. That is why the change of a school counsellor as educational leader is a philosophical and behavioral congruence that is needed in educational institutions from teachers to students (McMahon, Mason & Paisley, 2009). There is a call, mainly in the USA, for guidance counsellors to provide leadership within education (Curry & DeVoss, 2009; McMahon et al., 2009; Shillingford & Lambie, 2010). The American School Counselors Association (ASCA) (2005), in their National Model created a new vision for school counselors and outlined several



new skills for counselors, one of which is leadership. The American School Counselors Association (2019), as part of their School Counselor Competencies, suggests that an effective school counselor serves as a leader in the school and community to promote and support student success. For counselors leadership needs to be not only a skill but also a “mindset” from which they do their work (Stone & Dahir, 2006). The counsellor’s leadership, work and advocacy toward an effective personalized learning model is focused on bringing about a change in practices that is aimed at benefiting all students.

It is as a school counsellor at ICS that I take a leadership role in this OIP and from the lens of an advocate for all students that I seek change. Creswell (2007) states that the basic tenet of advocacy is an action item for reform that may change the lives of the participants and the institutions in which they live in work. As school systems continue to become more diverse and complex, counsellors need to be leaders of social justice and advocacy for students (Curry & DeVoss, 2009). Social justice advocacy is an important component of any school counseling as each student and every student needs equitable status. Surprisingly, advocacy is not a formal condition of being a school counsellor in Canada (Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association, 2014). However, social justice advocacy is seen as a critical tool of the 21<sup>st</sup> century professional school counselor (Ratts, DeKruyf & Chen-Hayes, 2007). Advocacy for students has never been more important and guidance counsellors should lead to right injustices toward children. The shift to a personalized learning environment is aimed at making education more relevant and just for all students. This OIP is about freeing students from the guidance status-quo methods and work procedures established over the years and empowering them to be their own leaders of their future. As a counsellor at ICS I advocate for children.

### **Leadership Problem of Practice**

The effectiveness of guidance counsellors to provide effective post-secondary decision-making support for students is facing many challenges. The increasingly difficult secondary school environment in Canada is related to the increase in psycho-social/emotional issues, including stress and anxiety, experienced by students (American School Counselor Association, 2015, Ontario College of Teachers, 2018; Ontario School Counsellor Association, 2018). The support of these issues in students has moved to the forefront in schools and demands of guidance counsellors. Counsellors are stretched with large numbers of students, increased issues in society that are impacting the well being of students and increasing demands on their time (Hamlin et al., 2016). These issues, although important, could negatively impact the work of counsellors in supporting all students in their postsecondary decision-making. For example, Govan et al. (2006) found that the overwhelming majority, 74.3% of students, demonstrated a satisficing decision-making strategy towards choosing their college of choice. A satisficing decision is one that is less complex, lacks depth and is superficial (Govan et al., 2006). ICS's counsellors have seen the same demanding and increasing issues with its students. However, the mission driven university readiness remains a competing business imperative for the SGC.

In Canada, there is little research on post-secondary decision-making by students (see as examples: Domene, Shapka & Keating, 2006; Drewes & Michael, 2006; King, Warren, King, Brook, & Kocher, 2009; Nadon 2014; Peirce 1994). There are fewer yet that looks at private or independent school students. As an example, Peirce (1994) developed a Canadian survey that looked at important factors in the university decision-making process based on a case study of an independent school. (Dr. Peirce was a colleague and is a personal friend and is considered an expert in the field of university decision-making. He publishes resources for students and counsellors each year that are used in many Canadian schools to support the post-secondary

process. Although his research may be dated his input to this OIP is still relevant.) Peirce (1994) was published before the advent of technology in schools and the prevalence of technology for adolescence. The lack of current research in Canada on the specific topic presents a challenge. Research from the U.S.A. is used as it provides a depth of quantitative and/or qualitative analysis of counseling today. It also outlines the support being given to students in light of all environmental changes that have occurred in the psychosocial adolescent and technology environment. With the importance of higher education to Canada and the abundance of post secondary school choices available to students it is a wonder why more research has not been undertaken?

There are 97 Canadian universities that include literally thousands of programs for students to choose at the undergraduate level (Universities Canada, 2018). The task of picking one university or college that has the program of choice and is the best fit for the student is even more daunting given the number of selections overall. If students want a Bachelor's degree then it is important to start the conversation in Grade 10, that relates to their choice and with what they need to do to get there (Sciarra & Ambrosino, 2011). Starting in Grade 10 almost seems too late to effectively manage the information and research needed to make a competent and important decision by the end of Grade 12. The challenge for ICS is how the SGC continues to provide post-secondary advising at a superior quality with all the new demands placed on them by students. This leads to the problem of practice (POP): In a personalized learning environment framework what are the factors/conditions that impact the post-secondary decisions of students?

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

The private school market is competitive, so first and foremost ICS needs to attract families that can afford an Independent school and to show those families that there is a benefit to doing so. This is the business side of the school that is so important for its sustainability. ICS

promotes and differentiates itself as a school around many factors, some of which are significantly smaller class sizes than the public system, excellent teaching, a sense of community, great facilities and a better co-curricular program (Anonymous, 2018b). It is also changing to a new culture of personalized learning. As mentioned, ICS' mission statement highlights that the school prepares students for university and as a result, almost 100% of graduating students go to university. Parents choose ICS because they know there is a high probability that their child will attend university and it is this factor that showcases the success of the academic experience at ICS. The SGC provides support, information, guidance and structure to the process of university decision-making in what is a traditional model of guidance.

The history of guidance in schools is relatively short. The organizational structure of the guidance program we see today is a legacy system; with roots going back about 40 years (Nadon, 2014). Counseling in schools has become static in that it is not changing in response to the altering internal or external environments (Nadon, 2014; Ontario School Counsellors' Association, 2018). This has left postsecondary placement and decision-making lacking as counsellors are overextended with growing numbers of students facing increased psycho-social issues, which impact their well-being (Hamlin et al., 2016; Ontario College of Teachers, 2018; Ontario School Counsellors' Association, 2018). ICS' counsellors have the same growing challenges with students. However, without significant university placement results ICS could put their business model and sustainability at risk. This risk should provide an opportunity for the SGC to change how it supports students in their post-secondary decision-making.

Guidance in schools is probably more important now than ever as the social, technological and economic landscape is changing (American School Counselor Association, 2005; Johnson et al., 2010; Ontario School Counsellors' Association, 2018). These changing landscapes impact ICS and sheds light on the SGC and its traditional methods of guidance.

Currently the SGC is not aligned with the vision of personalized learning and therefore not congruent with the vision of ICS. Alignment is a key element of Nadler and Tushman's (1999) Congruence Model (Appendix B), related to the effectiveness and efficiency of an organization. In a simplified form the Congruence Model (Nadler & Tushman, 1999) relates the alignment of inputs to the work being done and how that impacts the outputs. This linear model relates well to the process of guidance in support of students' post-secondary decision making.

Research supports that inputs, specifically the history and environment of guidance related to the Congruence Model (Nadler & Tushman, 1999), have strategically stalled as far as any significant change process in counseling (Nadon, 2014). Therefore, on the input side, any change should focus on the history and environment of guidance departments and the current issues they are facing. Research in Canada is lacking in regards to guidance counsellor's impact on students' post-secondary decision-making and points towards a lack of focus in relevant data collecting for counselling in schools. In Ontario, for example, the multitude of the Province's ministry policies related to counseling in schools adds to the ever-increasing lack of focus for counsellors trying to deal with issues of curriculum, mental health, career and life planning and many other related guidance responsibilities (Hamlin et al., 2016; Nadon, 2014; Ontario School Counsellors' Association, 2018). Measurements for counsellors or guidance departments success with students are not easy to express definitively and do not appear to be congruent across schools or organizations (Savitz-Romer & Liu, 2014). It has become increasingly difficult to measure the success of counsellors in dealing with mental health issues in students that often demand more time and efforts. Equity then becomes an issue when counsellor to student ratios is extremely high and measurements of what is successful are lacking (American School Counselor Association, 2016).

The output focus at ICS has traditionally been to send its graduates to university. ICS has done well as currently 27% of citizens in Canada hold a university degree (The Conference Board of Canada, 2014). The number going to university is but one measurement of success and can be misleading on the overall satisfaction of the student in their post-secondary decision. The variety of potential output data is lacking at ICS but must be considered in the new personalized learning environment as to the success of any proposed solution. However, the measurements of success for university decision-making support for students, by counsellors, are hard to determine (Johnson et al., 2010). The US research paints a poor picture of overall student satisfaction with counselor input in university decision-making (Savitz-Romer, & Liu, 2014). Although much discussion has occurred in regards to increasing this number, there is no direct correlation found between university counselling in Canadian high schools and an increase in university degrees. There is research on how students choose a university based on the characteristics of the university itself (Drewes & Michael, 2006). The measurements of numbers of students going to university and completing their degree tend to fall on the school system as a whole and little direct relationship is found with guidance in the research. The challenge could be that output measurements, in Nadler and Tushman's (1999) terms, for guidance counsellors are not specific to student satisfaction with the post-secondary decision-making process.

This leads to the importance of the work done by counsellors in relation to the Congruence Model (Nadler & Tushman, 1999). Looking at one post-secondary choice, going to university, reveals that expectations of students are important in this decision-making selection (Govan et al., 2006; Peirce, 1994; Sciarra & Ambrosino, 2011). ICS is filled with families that expect their children to go to university. Research supports a foregone conclusion for ICS in that counsellors are most helpful when students already have a sense of what they want to do in life (King et al., 2009). The problem is that students overwhelmingly demonstrated a satisficing

decision-making strategy that supported the hypothesis that students use simpler decision-making strategies because of the limited amount of information that they have available to them and their lack of computational abilities (Govan, et al., 2006). The Internet is saturated with information on universities, colleges and post-secondary career opportunities, what is lacking is the ability of the student to further process, analyze and synthesize this information to make solid post-secondary decisions. As an example, in the SGC, students often look at the first year courses of the university program and do not further, are influenced by friends, do not take into account lab time or what the depth and breadth of future career possibilities truly are for their program of choice. The measure of success for ICS is not that students go to university, but that they have made a personalized, deep post-secondary decision, aligning with the vision of the school.

However, given that students may not yet be ready until after Grade 10 to consider post-secondary options creates a pressing problem for the SGC. It is no wonder that in two years time with all the information, data and options available that a critical post-secondary decision becomes time sensitive and satisficing (King et al., 2009; Govan et al., 2006). Any solution proposed must account for the lack of computational abilities and maturity in high school students around post-secondary decision-making, and the time sensitivity that they require in using the resources, both human and digital, to make competent decisions (King et al., 2009). It is also why any solution should include technology as a bigger impact in the process. Technology provides a platform for students to search and collect information but they also need support systems and decision-making skills development for what to do with that information once they have it.

The advent of technology in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century has to be the most prevalent environmental impact on adolescent educational behavior (Pleau, 2012). However, counsellors have not historically integrated technology into their practice. As far back as 1999, Stone & Turba,

suggested that school counselors should stay current with distance learning trends, discussion boards, and even the creation of online virtual guidance offices. However, research states that when we look at the readiness and effectiveness of school counsellors in preparing for virtual learning it is not positive (Harrison Ross, 2012). The SGC at ICS mirrors other institutions in this regard as a traditional guidance model that lags in its use of technology to prepare students for academic advising and post-secondary decision-making. In effect the SGC is not aligned with the school's vision.

### **PESTE Analysis**

A PESTE (political, economic, social, technological, and environmental) analysis provides a perspective on why the SGC has maintained a traditional guidance model. A shift to a personalized learning environment at ICS and a framework for post-secondary decision-making in the SGC requires an analysis for possible opportunities and threats (Cawsey, Deszca & Ingols, 2016). The four people/groups responsible for decisions related to this OIP are: students, parents, counsellors and administration. Here is a PESTE analysis applied to those influencers.

**Parent perspective.** Although the student is the focus in a personalized learning environment (Zmuda et al., 2015), it is prudent to start with the parents, and their tuition payments, as the financial engine of ICS. Parents choose ICS and pay tuition based on the quality of education and the ability of the school to ready their child for success beyond secondary school, and specifically entrance to a quality university. The change to a personalized learning environment could be difficult for parents. As educational systems change and become less recognizable to parents, they may wonder who is “teaching” their child and will the new system prepare their child well (Zmuda et al., 2015)? Parents look to the SGC for information on post-secondary options and where to turn in support of their child's decision-making. This is where the SGC needs to constantly prepare, adapt and strive to provide the highest quality of service to



families. A dynamic personalized learning framework for post-secondary decision-making that is focused and measurable for the elements that are most important to the child in their decision-making would be an opportunity for the SGC to provide an added value service for the parents. It could also provide for this POP in further understanding the gap in the current research on this topic in Canada.

**Student perspective.** There are many new environmental changes in the lives of students, the largest being the influence of technology (Pleau, 2012). Technology has provided positive and negative influences on students and a significant social element and power. Technology has changed the way in which students gather information, especially around universities, as significant amounts of this information is online. Students do not have to see a counsellor or visit a guidance office as they might have in the past for this information. However, it is not easy for students to make academic decisions in their young lives (Blenkinsop, Crone, Wade, & Morris, 2006). The format, amount and relevancy of information available to students online can be overwhelming and difficult to rationalize (Blenkinsop et al., 2006).

Technology should change the way that guidance departments and counsellors service student needs, however, this has generally not been the case (Steele, Jacokes, & Stone, 2014). It has been noted that one of the major changes impacting guidance in schools today has been an increase in the psychological and cultural change of anxiety and stress in adolescence (Hamlin et al., 2016). These studies show that counsellors' caseloads are too large for them to be effective in providing quality support to all students in all areas of counselling (Ontario School Counsellors' Association, 2018). These demands also prevent quality and quantity of time needed in professional development toward technology use in counselling (Steele et al., 2014). Technology is a threat to the SGC if they fail to meet students in their environment, online, in providing

quality formal and informal services around post-secondary decision-making while also continuing to provide the human interaction that is so important in the current system.

**Counsellor perspective.** The organizational structure of the guidance program we see in schools today was essentially established in the 1970's (Nadon, 2014). Schools in general have not adjusted their approach or strategies as the environment changed. Furthermore, counsellors and guidance departments have many ingrained ritualized routines and habits in servicing students that seem to be change resistant and hugely ineffective now that the environment and the students have changed (Nadon, 2014). At ICS for instance, counsellor notes are still written on paper that is then locked in a filing cabinet instead of being shared with student, family and advisor in a digital manner where greater input could be garnered from other stakeholders in the child's life. Student issues demand almost immediate attention from counsellors, as they can be very deep, serious and difficult problems. This means that counsellors are being asked to do more by the schools and the students, putting increased stress on the counsellor (e.g. Hamlin et al., 2016; Johnson et al., 2010).

ICS is no different in that its SGC is based on a legacy model where students make appointments to see, sit and talk with a counsellor. In Nadler and Tushman's (1999) terms the current guidance system, from inputs, through the work done by counsellors, to outputs, does not align and could become ineffective. Counsellors are struggling to keep up with the increased workload that is associated with the surge in psycho-social/emotional issues presented by adolescence in secondary schools today. Stress, anxiety, depression, autism, ADHD, bullying, and peer pressures are just some of the psycho-social/emotional issues that are on the rise in schools (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2018; Clark, 2007; Hamlin et al. 2016).

There is an opportunity for the SGC to align congruently with the proposed vision of the school in providing a personalized academic advising system.

**Administrative perspective.** Michelle Obama advised; “As you know all too well, the lack of counselors and high-quality college (university) and career advising in schools across our country is impacting our youth” (Savitz-Romer, & Liu, 2014, p. i). The Head of School is aware that academic advising and post-secondary placement in a personalized learning environment is vital for ICS. However, there is a competing political and economic need to minimize risk by having counsellors address most pressing problems that may be harmful to the child. ICS is a business so there are limited resources in terms of money available to continue to hire more counsellors in support of students. The historical and environmental input changes in society and education have especially influenced guidance systems and counsellors and created a gap in effective university counseling.

Herein lies the gap. Adolescents today are online seeking information, including university-decision-making information during high school. There is so much information that is available online that students find it difficult to grasp all of what it means. School counsellors are being pulled in many directions, and more toward big mental health problems that demand immediate attention. Counsellors historically are not in the online environment to help students with their post-secondary decision-making questions. The future state, and this OIP, must see counsellors effectively and efficiently using online tools in support of students at this important time of their life. Counsellors may become irrelevant in the university decision-making process of students if they cannot bridge this gap. It is this gap that will be examined in the organizational improvement plan as it pertains to the SGC at ICS.

### **Guiding Questions Emerging From POP**

The guiding questions from this POP relate to academic advising in a personalized learning environment and what factors are important in this model. ICS has never measured or surveyed students as to how satisfied they were with their post-secondary decision-making process and how important the SGC and the counsellors were in this process. So without data it is hard to know if changing the process will actually help the students at ICS? This is why Swanson's (2007) guiding question and four performance questions concerning outputs provide front-end analysis that relates to the end product or service enhancements. They also align with Congruence Model (Nadler & Tushman, 1999) in effectively measuring the output that is expected to occur. The guiding question Swanson provides is: if the success of the output cannot be foreseen to be successful then why undertake the change process? The four simple performance questions that Swanson (2007) recommends asking are:

1. "Will the individual perform better after the intervention?
2. Will the process perform better after the intervention?
3. Will the work team perform better after the intervention?
4. Will the organization perform better after the intervention" (p. 6)

In a personalized learning environment, the student is the individual in Question 1 above and the intervention relates to this OIP proposed solution for academic advising in a personalized learning environment. The work team, in Question 3, is the collective of people who support students. All four questions relate to the mission of the organization and the importance of university preparedness and that enhanced student decision-making performance will be achieved with a quality personalized learning system for academic advising.

The intervention in Swanson's (2007) questions relates to Fullan and Quinn's (2016) Coherence Framework that looks to deepening learning and focusing direction. It also relates to

the transformative process in Nadler and Tushman's (1999) Congruence Model that deals with people, work and the formal and informal organization (Cawsey et al., 2016). Ultimately Swanson (2007) is considering the measure of outputs now and also the future state that is important to this OIP. "The internal environment of the organization reflects the complexity and fluidity of its external environment" (Swanson, 2007, p. 6). As previously mentioned, it is difficult to discuss the complexity and fluidity of the external environment without discussing the impact of technology on adolescence and schools (Pleau, 2012). Nadon (2014) and Peirce (1994) state that there is very little research on counselling in Canada today and more specifically on university counselling and decision-making support. The following guiding question appears timely: How can technology be used innovatively and effectively in a personalized academic advising system? Therefore, Swanson's (2007) output-based questions could also postulate a gap analysis for ICS.

### **Leadership Focus Vision for Change**

Recently, there is a new Head of School at ICS. Given the hierarchical nature of the school the Head creates the leadership vision for change. The new Head of School was hired for their ability to lead the school in the direction of where it should be in five years. That direction is toward a personalized learning environment. They are hired by the Board to lead with a sense of continual improvement and innovation. New leadership has provided a major cultural and transformational shift in how students are educated at ICS

The relevancy of current curriculum and pedagogy has been cited by many students for their lack of engagement in their education (McEachen, Fullan, & Quinn, 2018; Zmuda et al., 2015). The vision for change at ICS starts with the Head and flows through the school's policies and it is the belief that personalized learning is a way to give students meaning and purpose in their lives. Competitive advantage and differentiation is key to the success and sustainability of

the school as a business entity. They are institutionalizing plans for a personalized learning environment at ICS, which has the support of the Board. The Head is the transformational change driver at ICS through their vision and position and has provided support for this OIP through mentoring and resource allocation.

Franciosi (2012) highlights that transformational leadership has been effective in educational settings. The author goes on to state that this should not be surprising considering the change that has been brought to education through government and society demands. He believes that education, like many other dynamic commercial entities; require new ways of thinking and problem-solving skills. Franciosi (2012) also found that “extraordinary” educational leaders had the characteristic of intellectual stimulation. This also aligns with my personal leadership style as a change agent in this OIP. In the past I have been involved in many change initiatives that have significantly altered Independent school education and cultures, specifically toward the use of technology in teaching and learning. I am accustomed to being the second level change agent and transformational leader.

There are two changes being addressed in this OIP, educational and cultural. The work of Fullan and Quinn (2016) and their Coherence Framework is informing the educational change (Appendix C). The Coherence Framework is comprehensive in its approach to whole school change and aligning the structures of the school toward the goal. For ICS and the goal for a more personalized learning approach, teachers and guidance counsellors need to shift away from the conservative notion of a school with the teacher or counsellor being the driver, to a more transformational and advocating way of thinking with all aspects being student centered. This is a fundamental cultural shift toward students’ first, student driven and purposeful learning. This cultural shift also needs to be highly supporting and nurturing for students as they transition to this model. Cameron and Quinn’s (2011) Competing Values Framework and Management Skills

Assessment Instrument (MSAI) will be used to align and reinforce the cultural change process. These two frameworks will now be outlined as they pertain to this OIP.

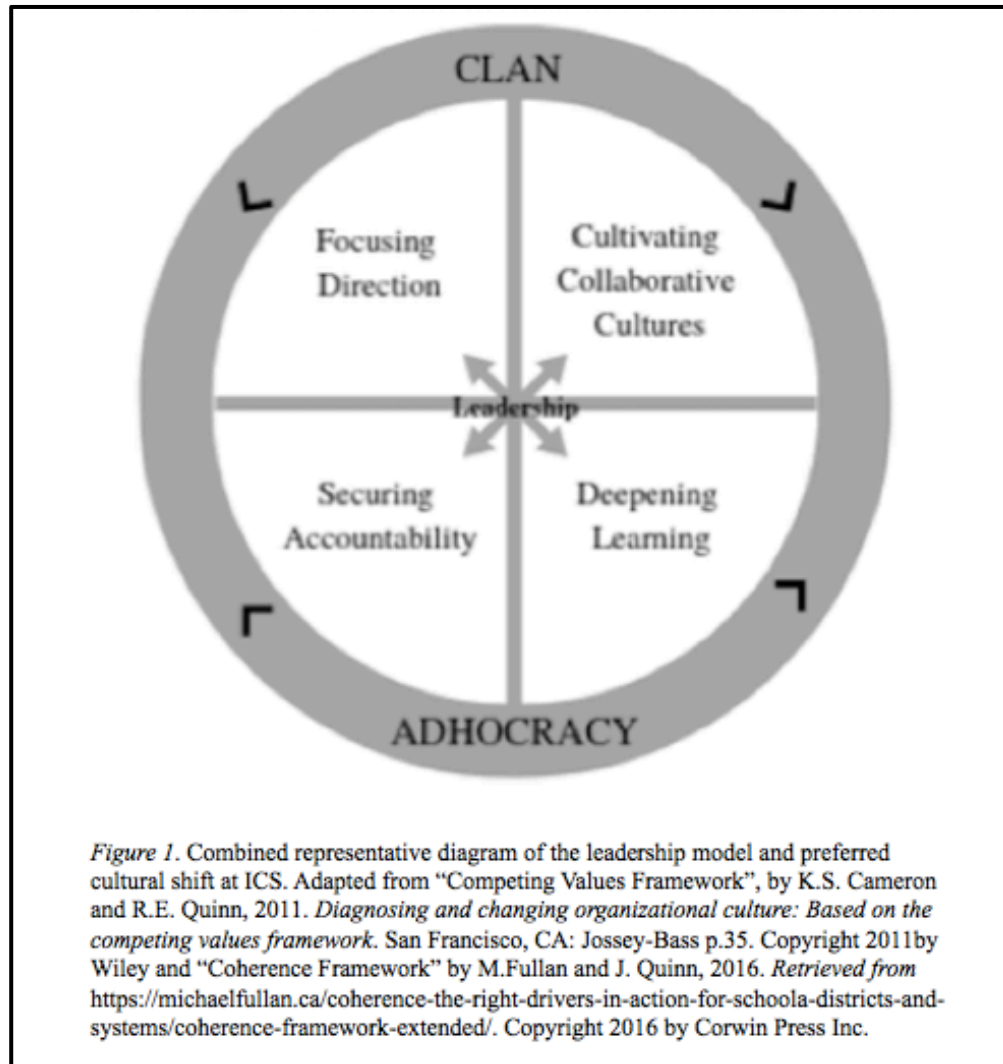
**Educational change theory - Coherence Framework.** ICS is first and foremost an educational institution so it would be prudent to have an educational framework for change as a prominent feature rather than a business model. Fullan and Quinn's (2016) Coherence Framework is specifically designed for schools, districts and educational systems and is especially relevant in the processes at ICS. This makes it easy to provide to the teachers and counsellors at ICS because the nomenclature and references are familiar and recognizable. The Framework has four areas related to leadership and change in educational institutions. The four areas are: Focusing Direction, Cultivating Collaborative Cultures, Securing Accountability, and Deepening Learning. Each of these areas need to feature prominently in the change toward personalized learning at ICS.

Fullan and Quinn (2016) suggest that what is needed are leaders who create a culture of growth in schools. Especially relevant here, and what the Head of ICS strives to establish is what they describe as a cultivation of collaborative cultures. "They recognize that what pulls people in is meaningful work in collaboration with others. They *use the group to change the group* by building deep collaborative work horizontally and vertically across their organizations." (p.47). Academic advising for students is a highly collaborative process as it involves, at different times, peers, parents, counsellors, advisors and teachers. Dweck's (2006) Growth Mindset, used internally at ICS for faculty growth, helps support Fullan and Quinn's (2016) Coherence Framework. The educational change to a personalized learning environment is only one vision change to ICS; there is also a cultural change.

**Cultural change theory – Competing Values Framework.** Cameron and Quinn's (2011) Competing Values Framework provides a simple tool for analyzing organizational culture and providing direction for ICS. The four cultures espoused: Hierarchy, Market, Adhocracy and Clan, relate well to ICS and its historical and current culture. Historically ICS could be categorized under cultures of Market and Hierarchy. Market is a results orientated, hard driving, emphasis on winning type of organization (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). Hierarchy is a structured environment, efficient, reliable, with standardized procedures (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). In a school this would look like students getting high marks and getting into very prestigious universities and programs as a measure of success. This is how ICS started and arguably needed to operate to grow. The shift toward a personalized learning environment demands a shift in culture at ICS and in the SGC.

The Head has specified that the preferred culture be more related to Clan and Adhocracy (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). Clan represents a friendly, extended family type of environment where leaders are seen as mentors. Most organizations would want their employees to have a certain genuine, caring feeling about their work and ICS is no different (Ciulla, 2014). Adhocracy addresses the need to change, where people are creative, dynamic and take risks. The Competing Values Framework (Cameron & Quinn, 2011) provides a way to analyze the current culture at ICS and in the SGC and its readiness to move forward to the preferred culture. For this OIP the Coherence Framework (Fullan & Quinn, 2016) of educational change leadership is wrapped in the values of Clan and Adhocracy (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). Figure 1 illustrates the combination of the two frameworks for the purpose of this OIP.





### SGC Leadership Focus

There are competing values in the SGC. As the school moves toward the new culture of a personalized learning environment, the systems and support in the SGC are based on legacy systems that are coming under pressure from external forces. ICS has a privileged counsellor to student ratio of 80 to 1, whereas on average the counsellor/student ratio in secondary schools in the province is 381 to 1 and as high as 595 to 1 (Nadon, 2014). At ICS, the status quo for providing students with excellent guidance support is well entrenched because of the excellent

student/counsellor ratio. However, there are warnings in regards to problems with guidance systems in public schools today that should create urgency for innovation in the SGC (Hamlin et al., 2016; Johnson et al. 2010; Nadon, 2014; Ontario College of Teachers, 2018; Ontario School Counsellors' Association, 2018). These problems include legacy systems for guidance departments, guidance counsellors being asked to support students in many areas that require more “complex skills”, increase in mental health issues in students and an overall lack of clarity in what counsellors are expected to do. Private schools are not immune to these problems as Donna Orem (2016) mentions in the Independent School Magazine. Orem reported that while she was serving on the board of a private school, the students applying with diagnosed learning disabilities quadrupled. Overall in the US the number of children, aged 4-17, with Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD), one of the many learning disabilities, has increased from 4.4 million in 2003 to 6.1 million in 2016 (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2018). The Ontario College of Teachers relates that the World Health Organization believes that by 2030 mental health disorders will be the leading cause of disabilities. Independent schools should expect to see these impacts represented in their schools.

ICS has seen an increase in students with diagnosed learning disabilities and it is one area that is requiring more attention within the SGC. Five years ago, there were no accommodations made for students with learning disabilities. In the past three years ICS has hired two full-time and one-part time Student Success Coaches to support students with learning disabilities. ICS has also seen the number of students with stress and anxiety issues increase, putting further responsibilities on the counsellors in the SGC. The SGC is well staffed with eight counsellors predominately supporting students in traditional methods.

The SGC needs to focus on providing excellent post-secondary decision-making for students in a personalized learning environment. Scarborough and Luke (2008) suggested that the

school context could allow the plans and actions of the school counsellor to increase their influence on the students' lives. This suggests the importance of political leadership for the counsellor in informal and formal structures of power in the school and in skills of negotiation, persuasion, collaboration, and advocacy (Scarborough & Luke, 2008). The counsellors at ICS must be prepared and ready to add leadership to the already numerous and growing tasks to effectively serve students while in a changing educational and cultural environment.

### **Organizational Change Readiness**

Changes in the environment require leaders to rethink the organization's strategy (Cawsey et al., 2016). This, in turn, results in changes in key tasks and how managers structure the organization to do those tasks. Strategy needs to flow from an accurate assessment of the environment and respond to or take advantage of changes occurring in that environment (Nadler & Tushman, 1999). Strategy needs to fit the organization's capabilities and competencies. "Like any living entity, an organization survives by acting and reacting effectively to its external environment. Unless it adjusts with appropriate changes to its approach and, when needed, its strategy, it reduces its capacity to thrive" (Cawsey et al., 2016, p. 77). Personalized learning is the adjustment that ICS is making to continue to thrive in the private school market. Students and teachers at ICS must adjust to an internal change to a personalized learning environment brought on by external change conditions such as the proliferation of technology in society and the relevancy of education to students. ICS in effect must align its pedagogy and curriculum systems to the changing strategy of personalized learning. This is no small task for one small school to undertake and will challenge its change readiness.

The vision for change at ICS is built into the framework of the school. The Head is hired by the Board to lead with a sense of continual improvement and innovation (Anonymous, 2018a). They are institutionalizing plans for a personalized learning environment and provide support for

this OIP. ICS is a small organization and although Bolman and Deal (2013) stress the importance of information and education in raising awareness of the need for organizational change, it is also politically important to know to whom that information needs to be directed. Bolman and Deal (2013) also predict that when staff comes to accept the information and related analysis, the ground will be fertile for the development of the shared vision. Avenues for innovation, change and growth are strategically built into many ICS's procedures. Certain internal ICS documented processes and external associations involvement provides impetus for continued school growth in support of the vision of the Head. Internal accountability for change is built into ICS's annual Faculty and Staff Improvement Plans, which now includes a personalized learning example of growth.

Elements for external accountability for change are provided by the Canadian Accredited Independent Schools (CAIS). The CAIS performs an accreditation process at all CAIS member schools every seven years. In its strategic directions, it states one of its core values as "Leadership: Exemplary leadership is the essential ingredient to continuous improvement and innovation" (Canadian Accredited Independent Schools, 2016, p. 5). Two other CAIS values; excellence and relevance, also mention commitments to improvement and innovation, two words that are synonymous with change. Heads of CAIS schools understand that change is necessary in a competitive private school market. That is why the Head's Leadership Team (HLT) has as one of its noted duties to implement change (Anonymous, 2018b).

Another example of the school's vision for change is the professional growth model and meaningful faculty evaluation (MFE), which is unique to ICS (Anonymous, 2018c). The MFE assumes teachers are professionals and are willing and eager to commit to mission based lifelong improvement of both weaknesses and professional higher-order strengths, and the life-long pursuit of professional interests, hopes, and aspirations. The MFE has the main objective of

enhanced student success, happiness and performance (Anonymous, 2018b). Finally, the school's faculty and staff improvement plans, specifically ask all employees to look at developing plans for innovation and change within their roles. These plans are self-directed, and each staff member is monitored by, and reports to, a member of the SLT in regards to their plan.

ICS respects Dweck's (2006) Growth Mindset framework for its students and its faculty and staff. It is a framework that will be mentioned in this OIP because it is used by the school and will provide impetus for continuous growth. According to Dweck (2006) there are two different types of mindsets – fixed and growth. A person who has a fixed mindset believes that their qualities such as intelligence, creativity, and talent are predetermined and finite, fixed traits. On the other hand, a person with a growth mindset believes that their basic abilities can continue to be developed through hard work and dedication. These innate qualities are just starting points with success being the fruit of effort, learning, and persistence. Growth mindset can also be applied to organizations and preparedness for change. Organizations with a fixed mindset tend to become static or have a finite limit to their potential and outputs. Organizations with growth mindsets continue to develop as an organization and look for ways to continuously improve and grow. Nadon (2014) has suggested that guidance departments in schools would have fixed mindset and that research has shown that in general, guidance departments in schools are legacy systems that have been resistant to change.

Avenues for innovation, change and growth are built into many ICS processes. ICS builds in change through innovation and growth, which is ingrained in the culture of the school. This OIP relates to my MFE of preparing a framework for academic advising in a personalized learning environment. My MFE is monitored by the Academic Director but is also supervised and in the purview of the Innovation Director because of the transformational nature of the OIP.

**Conclusion**

ICS is a young school on the Canadian Independent school landscape that has experienced much growth and success. With a new Head of School and a new vision with the aim to create a personalized learning environment, ICS is about to change. All teachers are being asked to adjust their teaching and learning in support of a new culture of personalized learning. To be fully aligned with the new vision the SGC also needs to adjust its traditional methods to also support and provide a personalized learning path for our students and their post-secondary decision-making. As an organization ICS is ready for change and has transformational leadership in key positions. The next steps are to plan and develop how the SGC at ICS can better serve our students in this new school environment.

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

### **Introduction**

ICS as an educational organization is changing toward a personalized learning environment for students. It is a move away from a teacher-centered model of education to one where all students learn that they are powerful forces in their environment and the work between students and teachers is collaborative; where students are more engaged, knowledgeable, and compassionate and also where teachers rediscover their fascination for teaching by unleashing human potential (Zmuda et al., 2015). This chapter will be looking at how transformational leadership will drive the change process to achieve the new personalized learning vision, propose solutions to the POP and understand ethics inherent in leading the change. Those in leadership positions will need to take responsibility as this change will take time and invariably produce some challenge along the way.

### **Leadership Approach to Change**

Undertaking such a large strategic educational and organizational shift at ICS, our Head has become a context setter, the designer of a learning experience for everyone, not an authority figure with solutions (Fullan, 2001). They understand that their leadership in a culture of change will be measured as effective or ineffective not by whom they are as a leader but by the leaders they produce (Fullan & Quinn, 2001).

**Leadership from the Head.** The Head of ICS understands, and has stated many times, that change is a process and that there are no blueprints for change and that sometimes we will make mistakes. The strategic vision change at ICS impacts leadership throughout the school but it is inherent upon many to take on leadership actions or behaviours that will help move the process forward. The business aspects of the school must adapt to promote and support the

change. Teachers started adapting pedagogy, the SGC and counsellors need to provide a more personalized approach to academic advising, which is the main focus of this OIP, and students must adapt and change to a new way of learning. By changing ICS's strategic approach, the school has started the process of shifting the overall teaching and learning culture (Fullan, 2001). For example, for the first time, all teachers must have a personalized learning component in their curriculum and produce an artifact related to personalized learning as part of their improvement plans.

Fullan (2001) would promote that personalized learning at ICS is a reculturing of the institution. This reculturing is meant to deepen the learning experience for the student and also in overall moral purpose (Fullan & Quinn, 2016; McEachen et al., 2018; Zmuda et al., 2015). It provides for a collaborative work environment that respects differences and constantly builds and tests knowledge against measurable results (Fullan, 2001; Fullan & Quinn, 2016). The process of change takes time for all involved and builds upon itself through feedback and collaborative processes (Curry & DeVoss, 2009; McMahan et al., 2009; Scarborough & Lake, 2009). Leading in a culture of change means creating a culture (not just a structure) of change. The foundation of change is based on five core aspects: moral purpose, understanding change, relationship building, knowledge creation and sharing, and coherence making (Fullan, 2001).

Reculturing is important for ICS because it highlights the means of producing the capacity to seek, critically assess, and selectively incorporate new ideas and practices all the time, inside the formal organization of teaching and learning as well as outside it. It supports the Competing Values Frameworks (Cameron & Quinn, 2011) of Clan and Adhocracy preferred by the Head. Teachers and counsellors at ICS will need sustainable energy, enthusiasm, and hope, to understand the moral purpose of deeper student learning during this process (Fullan, 2001; Tuana, 2014). Once the educators and counsellors (the second order leaders) who work with



students every day realize they own the educational shift — that it is also personal to them as teachers — they will realize that they have ownership of the process to create new and different solutions in a much timelier fashion than before in the traditional model of education (Fullan, 2001; Zmuda et al., 2015). ICS must have collaboration across the organization, between students, teachers, counsellors, administrators and directors, for true greater, deeper, success (Fullan & Quinn, 2016).

The demand for a collaborative, creative and problem solving faculty and guidance counsellors changing to a personalized learning culture demands capacity building. With the Coherence Framework applied to this OIP the capacity of the teachers and counsellors involved needs to continue to move in the direction of innovation (Fullan & Quinn, 2016). In adopting the Coherence Framework, the Head at ICS has implemented the following research-informed practices for change leaders put forward by Fullan and Quinn (2016) for successful change initiatives:

- Participate as a co-learner;
- Encourage leadership from the middle, and recognize that “shifting practices” can come from all levels of the organization; (p.37)
- Balance push and pull strategies;
- Create “safe places for risk taking”; (p.31) and,
- Build capacity in every way possible.

This OIP involves early adopters in the change at ICS. Fullan and Quinn (2016) state that leaders should celebrate the successful leaps forward by early adopters in order to encourage less confident and more reluctant staff to also move forward.

**Leadership at many levels.** For a sustainable cultural shift to a personalized learning environment there is the opportunity for leadership for many at ICS (Fullan, 2016). Fullan (2001)

outlines that achieving such mastery is less a matter of taking a leadership course and more a case of deliberate and deep learning in collaboration with others at all levels of the school. For example, teachers must lead in developing curriculum and pedagogy and counsellors must lead in providing academic advising opportunities aligned with personalized learning.

Through a Growth Mindset (Dweck, 2006) and attention to a Continuous Improvement Cycle (Shakman, Bailey & Breslow, 2017) ICS's professionals must become better leaders. The other, more fundamental, conclusion is that the internal commitment — that part of the job that is intrinsically rewarding — cannot be undertaken by the Head (Fullan, 2001). In a school, this internal obligation is nurtured through relationships in the classroom and counsellor offices, and for that to happen there must be many leaders around us. ICS strives to achieve a high degree of internal commitment. For the benefit of its students, it will take good leadership at all levels for this achievement, and this will feed on itself (Fullan, 2001; Fullan & Quinn, 2016).

Similar to the experience in many educational institutions, change at ICS has been difficult at times. On the whole teachers and counsellors have been hesitant to change (Hamlin et al., 2016; Hargreaves, 2005; Johnson et al., 2010; Nadon, 2014; Shillingford & Lambie, 2010) There is a hesitancy, slowness or refusal to change their teaching or guidance practices. Teachers hired today represent a different demographic. Hargreaves (2005) suggests that the change in demographics will not automatically lead to greater improvement or new realization in schools. School leaders need input from their followers, the teachers and counsellors, to bring forth new ideas and ways of teaching especially using technology yet, according to Hargreaves (2005), on the whole, teachers do not think in this way. This could be an issue for ICS, as it needs creative teachers and counsellors who can translate personalized learning and use technology innovatively for the school to achieve its vision.

In many organizations concerns linked to issues of autonomy, control and co-operation surface frequently. (Keidel, 1995; Ontario Ministry of Education, 2016). This is also true at ICS where teachers have historically been highly autonomous in their roles. This autonomy makes it difficult for leaders to directly control the culture, but they can change it through their leadership framework and how they direct the institution (Galbraith, 2014; Fullan & Quinn, 2016). The employees' learning and adaptation needs must also match the strategic vision change (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). The personalized learning environment change at ICS may be good not only for students and their increased motivation and deeper learning but for everyone involved. (Zmuda et al., 2015). Hopefully, it will also inspire educators to rediscover the excitement and enthusiasm that comes from unleashing human potential; both in their own teaching and their students learning (Leithwood, 1992; Leithwood & Sun, 2012; Zmuda et al., 2015). This is the essence of deeper learning. (Fullan & Quinn, 2016; Zmuda et al., 2015).

It is through these research-informed practices at ICS that counsellors can initiate change and shift to a personalized learning model for academic advising. Counsellors are provided with support through collaboration and a safe place to move forward with the change process. They are also leading from the middle of the organization.

There has been a call for guidance counsellors to be leaders in educational change (Curry & DeVoss, 2009; Hamlin et al., 2016; Johnson et al., 2010; Shillingford & Lambie, 2010; Nadon, 2014). With the change in culture to a personalized learning environment at ICS the SGC needs to seize the opportunity to shape their vision in this change. Guidance counsellors as leaders in a culture of change must deliberately establish innovative conditions and processes in the first place, and then guide them after that (Curry & DeVoss, 2009; Fullan, 2001). Students ultimately must take over the leadership of their learning in a personalized learning environment. Guidance counsellors as leaders are actually more effective in their involvement with students in this

scenario than they are with traditional, more hierarchical control-based strategies (Scarborough & Luke, 2008).

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

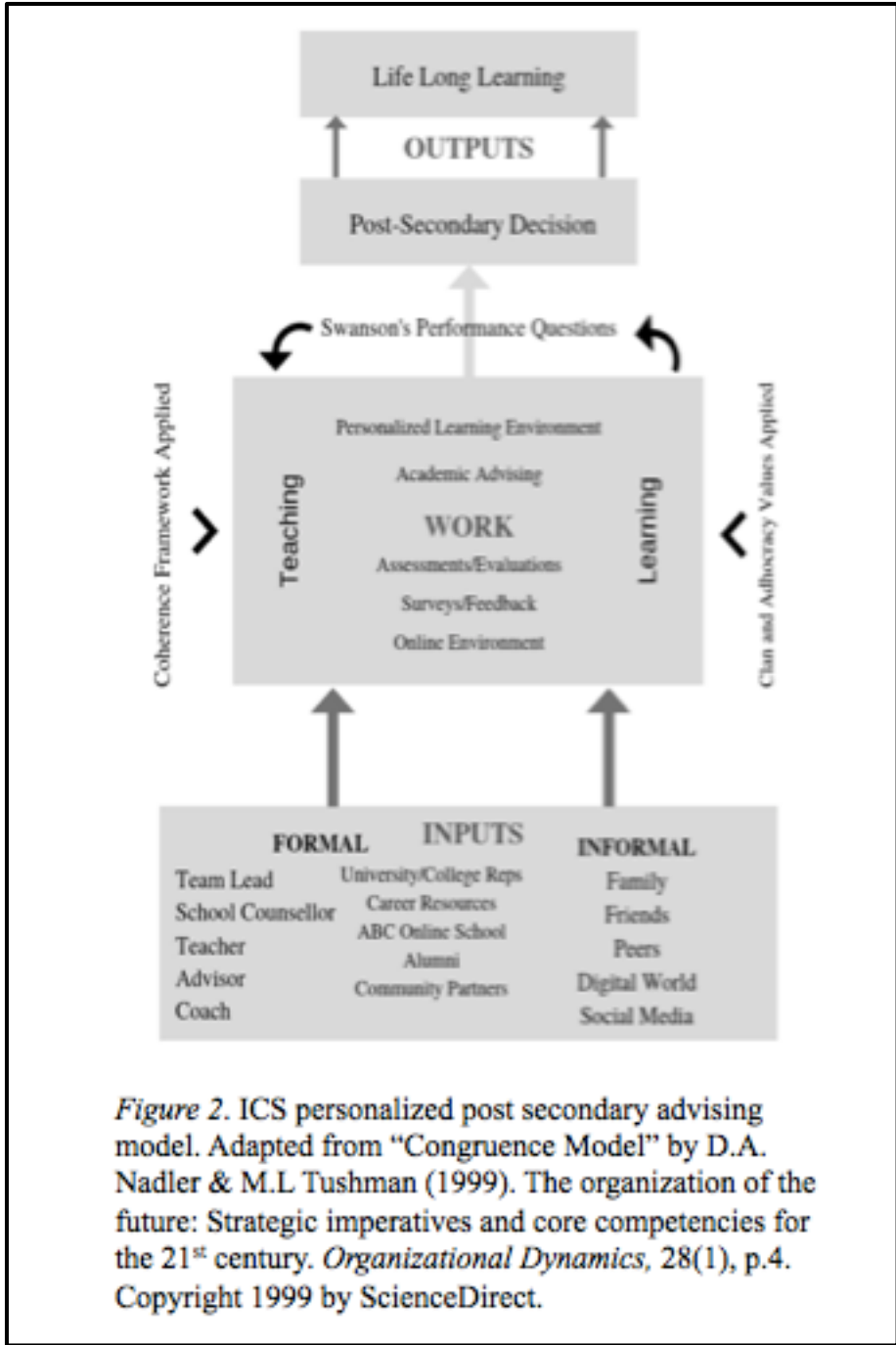
What ICS is attempting to do for students is what is referred to as deeper learning or engagement in their post-secondary decision-making (McEachen et al., 2018; Zmuda et al., 2015). Deeper learning is a focus on real world problems and where students are undertaking authentic work. The SGC is attempting to deepen learning for students in academic advising and ultimately their post-secondary decision-making. The student's post-secondary decision of what they will do, where they will do it, why they want to do it, how they will get there and when it will occur is a deep decision for people at such a young age. Currently, there are push and pull forces at work in influencing student decisions of how they interact with their learning (Fullan & Quinn, 2016). The push factor is that, often, school is boring for students and they are less interested in learning in a traditional environment and the pull factors are the innovations in the digital world and the allure to more engagement and excitement online (Geurin, 2017; McEachen et al., 2018; Nova Scotia School Boards Association, 2014). Currently, the SGC is an information providing mechanism for students in their post-secondary decision-making. Counsellors must take a lead in shifting from an information-providing source to a more dynamic post-secondary decision-making strategy and work environment for students.

As Fullan and Quinn (2016) suggest:

Second, *relentless focus* (or “focused direction”) means we must abandon the notion that there is a silver bullet, package, or program (including technology) that is a solution and recognize that the next shift in learning will require knowledge building by everyone engaged and must affect *all* students. (p. 79)

This second focus provides leadership opportunities for counsellors but also for the student and the ICS community to engage in and provide input to the change process required for academic advising and post-secondary decision-making.

**Model for academic advising.** Figure 2 represents a new model for academic advising at ICS based on Nadler and Tushman's (1999) Congruence Model. As discussed earlier in Chapter 1, it is the changes in the input side of and specifically the current environment that students are in, which require the SGC and counsellors to rethink our academic advising strategy. As previously considered the external environment for students has changed dramatically. The advent of technology has to be the most prevalent environmental impact on adolescence behavior in the last 20 years (Nova Scotia School Boards Association, 2014; Pleau, 2012). In the case of university admissions, students are inundated with selection criteria and the increase in information presented to them has changed the educational environment and student decision-making in many ways (Govan et al. 2006). Anxiety and stress in adolescence are in numbers that have not been seen before (Hamlin et al., 2016). All these external environmental changes have an impact on the process and work of guidance departments to service student needs. The SGC needs to focus their leadership in the work section of this model. In the words of Fullan and Quinn (2016), work in this area will provide a deeper understanding that students need regarding the learning process of post-secondary decision-making.



It is in the work process area that the individual/institutional leadership principles and practices of the counsellors and the SGC need to change to achieve the new vision of ICS. It leads the SGC away from the traditional information providing mechanism to the new way of processing student learning. The outputs of the work performed in academic advising for students

may not change, as students will graduate and move on from ICS. However, it is hoped that they will have a deeper more authentic understanding of their decision.

**School counsellors as leaders.** The approach for leading this change in the SGC is to move counsellors into leadership roles (Curry & DeVoss, 2009; McMahon et al., 2009; Shillingford & Lambie, 2010). The first aspect in making this change is to assess the starting point and capacity of the SGC and the counsellors to shift to a personalized learning environment. The counsellors are key to moving forward in this planning. Moving counsellors back into a teaching role will be important. There are four questions that provide a framework for leadership needed by counsellors in the change process according to Fullan and Quinn (2016). These four questions help to assess the capacity of teachers however, in the case of this OIP the word counsellor has been substituted for teacher in the original questions put forth in the Coherence Framework (Fullan & Quinn, 2016, p. 100).

1. *Do counsellors possess knowledge and skills in pedagogical practices?* At ICS counsellors are professionals who have shifted from the teaching role to the counsellor role so their formal training is originally as a teacher. They possess the knowledge and skills in pedagogical practices as a professional teacher. The counsellors at ICS have all taught guidance-based courses in the past based on the provincial requirements for guidance education in secondary school. However, currently at ICS they are not in the formal organization of teaching students but do so through the informal organization of the school. Since there is only one formal guidance course at ICS counsellors should be reinserted in a leadership role in this course so they may influence the learning process. This will be highlighted in the solutions section.

2. *Do counsellors have knowledge and skills to develop new learning partnerships?*

Personalized learning means establishing real world connections for students (Zmuda et

al., 2015). ICS is looking for new learning partnerships as part of its overall strategy. Currently counsellors at ICS primarily work with students. However there are current internal and external learning partnerships in place that have been developed over time. These partnerships are primarily with teachers, admission personnel at universities and colleges who visit the school; alumni who provide pathway information and professional health care people who provide outsource support for physical and mental health concerns of students. In this regard counsellors will have to branch out and find a variety of different partnerships in areas of academic advising, decision-making and post-secondary options in both the digital and real worlds. This is an unknown area for the department.

3. *Do counsellors have the knowledge and skills to create learning environments that move beyond the traditional classroom?* This is a critical part of this OIP. It has been discussed already how counsellors have been slow to move to more technology use within their profession (Harrison Ross, 2012; Stone & Turba, 1999). At ICS there are still many components of the role of the counsellor and their interaction with students that is still paper based. The SGC has been slow in moving toward more digital realms. However there are supports and skill sets within the department and within the school that would help facilitate this process. The school is known for its technological innovation in many areas and is establishing online courses that would benefit this process.
4. *Do counsellors have the knowledge and skills to use digital resources to accelerate learning?* This is one of the key questions. The terms accelerate learning here means accelerating decision-making because there is a limited amount of time for students in this regard – four years. As outlined in the next section, this timeline is different for each student, and students may not be ready to begin the process until after Grade 10. This leads to the effectiveness and efficiency of digital resources as a solution to this POP.



These digital resources have to be authentic and relevant which is the premise of personalized learning.

Currently, the SGC does not provide a decision-making pedagogy that is either well defined or accelerated by technology. The current model of academic advising at ICS may not be the right “fit” for the student in terms of the Congruence Model (Cawsey et al., 2016). However, ICS does have the capacity within the SGC to provide leadership for the process of organizational change in this OIP. Through this process, the SGC could be the first organizational unit or department within ICS to provide a comprehensive model of personalized learning.

### **Critical SGC Analysis**

Students need to be provided with the opportunity to embrace their future and be engaged in the overall process of what they want to do after high school. There are three major factors that obfuscate the process of academic advising and student decision-making that may impact the success of a personalized academic advising model. The first, time is one of the most important elements of effective and efficient decision-making for students. Secondary schools in Canada, apart from Quebec, are generally four years, Grades 9 through 12, so this linear time line ultimately energizes the overall process. Yet, there are many corollary aspects of time that inhabit the process as well that need exploring. Second are the many influencers involved; parents, teachers, peers, advisors, school culture, family and friends that may effect what students decide to do after high school. Third is the process of post-secondary decision-making and its details and intricacies. This intricacy requires analysis as it significantly impacts adolescent abilities to make a deeper decision. When all three factors; time, influencers and process are working together it can get very complex.

**Time.** Adolescents bring different mindsets to the decision-making process and their decisions can change and fluctuate over time. There is a finite amount of time in high school when most students are able to process and make a deep decision about their future. Few young people, especially 14 year olds, or Grade 9 students, made the link between careers education and guidance activities and the decisions they are making, these connections have to be made more explicit (Blinkesop et al., 2006; Govan et al., 2006). Research also shows that expectations in sophomores, age 15, or Grade 10 in Canada; appear to have a weaker predictive effect than later student expectations (Sciarra & Ambrosino, 2011; King et al., 2009). More specifically males in Grade 9 and 10 may need more non-traditional methods of guidance, especially if they have lower future aspirations (Domene, et al., 2006). Even the timing of the Grade 10 Careers Course in Ontario as an example, does not fit well with the critical decision points regarding the goal to go to college or university (King et al., 2009). A later review with students, beyond Grade 10 in Canada, of post-secondary options would be essential.

Students change their minds many times about what they wanted to do throughout their school years (King et al., 2009). It is hard to determine when students are ready and prepared to make a decision when half of senior year students reported needing more information in order to make a college choice (Ray, 1992). “Because students have been forced to change their aspirations as they reach their final year of secondary school, it is advisable for students ‘to have a broader understanding of the full range of educational and work opportunities’” (King et al., 2009, p.80). As students mature and move toward secondary school graduation they tend to have a more realistic viewpoint of their future (Sciarra & Ambrosino, 2011). Hopefully this is not too late for the student’s deep learning and understanding of their post-secondary options.

Another important aspect of time is adolescent development. While students are going through the process of determining what they want to do after high school, they are also going

through many developmental changes in their lives. The changes in growth from a 13-14-year-old Grade 9 student to a 17-18 year old graduate are extreme. Counsellors need to be concerned about the timing of adolescent development and well being of the student and understand that too much emphasis on university admissions when students are trying to find out who they are may just provide a telescopic view of their future (King et al., 2009; Ray, 1992). Post-secondary decision-making needs to be a process where the student funnels information back for further deliberation and reflection. Students need creativity and exploration in their learning, including learning about their post-secondary options, so pushing this process too early may well stunt the student's decision-making ability (King et al., 2009; Ray, 1992; Zmuda et al., 2015).

King A., Warren, King, Brook and Kocher (2009) outline four different areas of adolescent development that impact post-secondary decision-making: cognitive, physical, social and emotional. The importance of King et al.'s (2009) work is that it is significant Canadian research from the province of Ontario on post-secondary decisions of students, in this case with a college context. During adolescence the brain is still undergoing cognitive changes so the environment continues to play a substantial role in assisting with organization and integrating information, both important to decision-making (King et al., 2009). Parents, teachers and counsellors should be cautioned from reaching premature judgments regarding adolescents' interests, skills and emotional well-being. Deciding future plans by the middle of high school may well be flawed as students may lack the basic cognitive maturity (Dietsche, 2013).

There is a wide variation in physical maturation and emotional characteristics of students over the course of high school (King et al., 2009; Morin, 2019). For example King et al. (2009) state that early maturing females are more likely to adapt adult norms. Parents, teachers and advisors may assume that early maturing females are able to make decisions but they may be struggling with many emotional issues. Later maturing boys have been found to have lower self-

esteem or confidence than earlier maturing boys, suggesting they may follow the advice of others, especially their peers, than make decisions on their own. The appearance of physical maturity in both boys and girls are likely to partially influence the judgments of parents, teachers and counsellors regarding their capacity to make decisions and what and where they want to go after high school (King et al., 2009; Morin, 2019). This is why ABC Online School, which will be discussed later as an expert in online course provision, develops different pedagogy according to gender (Anonymous, 2019a).

Studies show that teenagers need considerable time to learn how to assert their independence (King et al., 2009; Clark, 2007). Adolescents today are more dependent on their parents for emotional and financial support than earlier generations. There are suggestions that in our ever evolving complex world, many young people are very unrealistic in the types of roles they expect to assume as adults and these views are held well into their twenties (King et al., 2009; Clark, 2007). “Helping adolescents recognize and address unrealistic life plans in the context of rising educational and occupational aspirations is perhaps one of the most challenging aspects of the high school Counsellor’s job.” (King et al., 2009, p.4) King et al (2009) studied young people in Ontario who did not go to post-secondary study right after secondary school. It was a collaborative research project with the Ontario Colleges to help understand the characteristics of these young people. Chapter 9: Post Secondary Decision Making was of particular interest as it focused on the secondary school experience and how it shaped students’ decision making. Factors such as secondary school programs and courses, guidance counselling, influence of parents and peers, academic achievement, part-time work and engagement in school life were outlined for their importance and impact on students’ decision-making. King et al. (2009) found that adolescents now, more than ever, need practicable and effective expectations about life after secondary school.

The role of expectations that students have regarding post-secondary attainment is important (Sciarra & Ambrosino, 2011). The more counsellors know about student expectations the more they can support them in their post-secondary aspirations. Counsellors need considerable time to fully know and understand a student's expectations. One of the keys to young people making decisions is that they make them in different and personalized ways (Dietsche, 2013; King et al., 2009). This aligns with the key premise behind personalized learning, which is that each student needs different support. There is a current gap in the research available about which students are the most in need of other "modes of career development and service delivery" and at what time they are ready for it (Domene et al, 2006, p.148). As an organization ICS has never analyzed the timing of student decision-making and does not have this information for its specific students. The gap in relevant student data pertaining to when they are most ready for the process of post-secondary decision-making provides an opportunity for ICS to measure, survey and collect data and be a leader in this area.

**Influencers.** The time pressure of high school has impacted who influences students in their post-secondary decision-making. Feeling the pressure of making decisions early in high school, many students may incorrectly rely on the advice of others who may not necessarily have their interests as a priority, leading young people to foreclose options to explore other types of programs (Ray, 1992). The PESTE analysis in Chapter 1 outlined three of the decision maker groups/people that heavily influence student decision-making in high school. How parents, guidance counsellors, and administrators as dynamics interact in the decision-making process of students are important (King et al., 2009).

There is also a growing importance of peer groups. Today adolescents are members of smaller social groups-cliques or larger crowds-that appear to change from year-to-year (King et al., 2009; Morin, 2019). In private high schools where curricular programs are predominately,

university orientated, the discussion of university choice, admission and campus life can be found in student social groups and among school classmates both within the school and in social media (Morin, 2019). Peers through social media have a significant impact on many students' decision-making abilities. This significance should not be underestimated; yet, this OIP will not go into the copious research that abounds in this area.

It has been shown that the administration of schools can make a difference in how adolescents make decisions. There is a link between how schools present effective curriculum management, student support, staff expectations and school leadership and how confident and competent and satisficing decision-making in students occurs (Blenkinsop et al., 2006). When students feel supported by the school in their decision-making the school becomes more influential and students are less influenced by outside factors such as friends and family. It does take time for students to make decisions and they require conversations with people in school such as, teachers, advisors and counsellors who provide impartial information on course possibilities and career pathways (King et al., 2009; Blenkinsop et al., 2006). School involvement equals higher post-secondary education (King et al., 2009). Although counselors in school are the most common source of support for educational issues, family remains the first source for career support (Domene et al., 2006).

King et al. (2009) state that adolescents turn primarily to their parents for psychological, social and financial support when making major decisions such as college or university choices. Parental expectations play a central part in the educational outcomes of students, although there is still a lack of research in this area (Dietsche, 2013; Domene et al., 2006; King et al., 2009; Sciarra & Ambrosino, 2011). "The effect of parents' influence on young people's career decision-making begins early with their pre-school experiences and the role modeling that parents reinforce. By secondary school, parental influence takes a very specific form – i.e., pressure to take particular

courses, especially courses that lead to university.” (Domene et al., 2006, p. 160) That students turn to parents for career related support means that any solution provided by the school should include the parents in the decision-making process. This is why there has been a call within the counseling community to use additional modes of service delivery to improve services to parents, one of those being indirect service delivery, using technology as a tool.

University decision-making research has uncovered differences in private education parent and student thoughts toward importance of various factors. For example, it has been shown that private school parents put more emphasis on academic quality and reputation of universities than students (Peirce, 1994). This runs counter to university admissions personnel and high school counsellors who spend much time on a best fit strategy for students and does not focus purely on the name of the university (Peirce, 1994). Peirce (1994) suggests that a greater focus may need to be directed towards the parents in this regard. Parental influence may also be evident in the fact that guidance counsellors were most helpful when the student had a sense of purpose or clarity regarding a career and the counsellor could help them plan toward that career (King et al., 2009) It has been stated that perhaps guidance counsellors, need to consider our own role in “facilitating or hindering student help-seeking.” (Domene et al., 2006, p.155)

“Having the responsibility and expertise to assist students in making college decisions puts high school counsellors in a crucial position to affect the welfare of the college bound student.” (Ray, 1992, p.22) It is interesting that even as early as 1992, before the advent of the Internet and the digital age, Ray recognized that there was a gap between what information and guidance students needed in order to make a successful post-secondary choice and what was being provided by the school counseling system. This gap seems to still remain today, over 25 years later (Ontario School Counsellors’ Association, 2018; Savitz-Romer & Liu, 2014). Large caseloads, administrative tasks and the proliferation of anxiety and mental health issues mean that

counsellors do not spend enough time on the process of post-secondary decision-making and are less of an influence on student decisions (Hamlin et al., 2016; Johnson et al., 2010; Nadon, 2014; Ray, 1992). Ray (1992) suggested that in order to better serve students in university decision-making, counselors needed to familiarize themselves more adequately with the services provided by school guidance programs which help students find most helpful in assisting them in the process. The failure of counsellors to heed these early and continuing warnings about the effectiveness of their programs is ominous.

Historically, some of the greatest problems for counsellors related to university advising were centered on keeping accurate information about different university programs and admissions requirements (Ray, 1992; Peirce, 1994; Nadon, 2014). With the advent of technology this information is readily available to students and parents on a global scale if needed. It is no longer the domain of the counsellor to be the expert on everything university. Technology has brought to the counsellor what technology has also brought to the teacher in the classroom, information and learning will occur outside of the formal structure. Information is readily available to students so different ways of teaching and learning need to occur. There is an opportunity for ICS to collect data on the effectiveness of the SGC or the counsellor on the post-secondary decision-making of students through this OIP process.

**The process of post-secondary decision-making.** Students may be unable to effectively develop post-secondary decision-making strategies because the process carries a number of difficult developmental and organizational components (Blenkinsop et al., 2006; Govan et al., 2006; Ray, 1992) With the influencers involved in the student's life there are three other developmental and organizational pieces that characterize the decision-making process; stages of decision-making, the factors involved in making a decision and the model to be used to make the decision (Blenkinsop et al., 2006). With the amount of information available to students and with



the lack of time and pressure of influencers it is easy to understand why making a post-secondary decision has become an arduous task (Govan et al., 2006).

Table 1 outlines the developmental and organizational determinants involved in the students' post-secondary decision. The table provides a simplified framework for the complexity of the situation for adolescent decision-making (Govan et al., 2006). The stage of decision-making is the first piece of the process and is developmental and organizational. Hossler and Gallagher, as outlined in Peirce (1994) have provided an early outline of the stages in the university search process that still holds true to the students of today. Stage 1 is the predisposition stage, where the student makes a choice of what to do after secondary school. Stage 2 is the search stage, where more information gathering is done at this point and it also includes increased interaction with the options, such as visiting university campuses. Stage 3 is the choice stage where the student is in the final close evaluation and the narrowing of the choice.

Table 1			
<i>Determinants in Students' Post-secondary Decision-making</i>			
<b>Stages</b>	1 – Predisposition	2 – Search	3 – Choice
<b>Factors</b>		<b>Decision-making Model</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intellectual</li> <li>• Social</li> <li>• Environmental</li> <li>• Personal</li> <li>• Information Sources</li> <li>• Interactive Characteristics</li> <li>• Independent Assessment</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Satisficing (heuristic)</li> <li>• Weighted-Adding (linear)</li> <li>• Equal-Weight (linear)</li> <li>• Lexicographic (heuristic)</li> <li>• Elimination by Aspects (heuristic)</li> </ul>	

*Note.* Adapted from “How High School Students Construct Decision-making Strategies for Choosing Colleges.” by G. Govan, S. Patrick, and C. Yen, (2006). *College and University*, 81(3), p. 24. Copyright 2006 by American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers; “A Three Phase Model of College Choice” by Hossler and Gallagher, 1987 as found in “*The university selection process: A Canadian perspective.*” M. Peirce, (1994). (Doctoral dissertation). Graduate Department of Education, University of Toronto, Toronto. p.8. Reprinted with permission.

These three stages could be applied to any post-secondary decision- university, college or GAP year and each student arrives and works through each stage at their own pace. However, the majority of students’ at ICS will reach Stage 3 toward the final term in Grade 12. ICS currently follows these stages in knowing when to provide information to students. For example, information on how to apply to universities in Canada is presented in Grade 11 during the search stage. Underlying this linear process is the assumption that each student is ready for the information at the same time. While moving through the three stages it is hoped that students are independently constructing a model of decision-making that best suits their needs as ICS does not

currently provide their students with a decision-making model. A gap in the current process is clear. Currently, the purpose is to provide information rather than a more comprehensive program. During these three stages the students look at a number of factors that may be important to them in their decision-making.

In looking at what to do when they graduate, students may look at many different characteristics of information associated with the choice and what is most important. Peirce (1994) lists and categorizes characteristics specifically associated with university choice that align under the following headings.

- A. Intellectual
- B. Social
- C. Environmental
- D. Personal
- E. Information Sources
- F. Interactive Characteristics
- G. Independent Assessment (p.34)

Overall, the information provided to students can be complex (Govan et al., 2006). Without a model of decision-making that helps students organize their thoughts and process information, it can be overwhelming. This may well explain why students make a very simplified decision (Govan et al., 2006; Pierce, 2012; Ray, 1992).

Along with the stages of decision-making and with the characteristics outlined, students need to be able to apply a decision-making model to process their final choice. Govan et al. (2006) found a great variation in the percentage of students using a particular decision-making model. The participants of their study were prospective freshman admitted to 47 liberal arts Colleges in the US who were administered the College Board's ASQ survey. The total adjusted

number of respondents is 20, 722 (Govan et al., 2006). Their findings are shared in the following comparison. The percentage of students using that type of model (shown in parentheses) is provided for comparison purposes.

- Satisficing (heuristic) (74.3%) - considered in order of the choice set. Attribute has to make the cut-off or it is not considered.
- Weighted-Adding (linear) (20.1%) - assign value to each possible attribute
- Equal-Weight (linear) (4.8%) - considers all alternatives and attribute values with no importance
- Lexicographic (heuristic) (0.9%) - assumes that attributes can be ordered in terms of importance within alternatives and if one alternative is preferred over all others based on importance of attributes, that alternative is chosen. Elimination by Aspects (heuristic) - eliminates alternatives that do not meet a minimum cut-off value for the most important attribute
- Elimination by Aspects (0.0%) (p. 24)

In looking at the time lines of decision-making, the influencers involved, the complexity of the process and the amount of information involved, it is somewhat understandable that adolescent students choose less complex decision-making strategies for their post-secondary options (Govan et al., 2006). Satisficing decision-making is a less complex model used by almost 75 % of students. This means that students are less all encompassing in information processing, selectivity, and non-compensatory in their planning (Govan et al., 2006). Given that this is the first time that students are making a complex decision of major consequence and importance, how can ICS ensure that its students are not using the most satisficing decision-making model? This question is especially important given that a poor choice could

have consequences on future occupational status and income for ICS alumni (Govan et al., 2006; Ray, 1992).

Currently, ICS uses an information-processing model in support of students' post-secondary decision-making (Govan et al., 2006). This model determines what information to provide to students, how much to provide, and how to provide that information in order for students to process, interpret and integrate information in making post-secondary choices. For example, Grade 9 is a transition year into secondary school for students at ICS, therefore little discussion happens around post-secondary decision-making. In Grade 11, students are provided with university agents, personal meetings with counsellors and grade meetings where information on post-secondary options are provided and discussed with all students in that grade. This leaves the student as information-processing agent who must construct decision-making strategies on their own to achieve a task because of limited information and processing capacities (Govan et al., 2006). This is not a deep personalized learning plan and a gap at ICS.

This analysis of the three factors influencing student decision-making exposes the gaps in the system. The SGC at ICS currently provides a single, one size fits all model of post-secondary decision-making. "These issues suggest that any single approach to support will not work for all young people and that all individuals need varying levels and type of support at different stages in their school careers." (Blenkinsop et al., 2006) ICS needs to provide a comprehensive process of decision-making that supports different individuals at times when they require the support. In 1992, Ray suggested that more research was needed to understand how students move through a self-defined decision-making process for post-secondary options and that mantra has been continued through Peirce (1994), Nadon (2014) and Govan et al. (2006). ICS could add to this research in its shift towards a personalized academic advising environment for its students.

ICS has a traditional model of support for post-secondary decision-making. With the movement to a personalized learning model the time for change has never been more evident. The critical analysis of how time, influencers and process impact student post-secondary decision-making has exposed gaps in the current processes at ICS. These gaps need to be addressed in the solutions to the POP. This is a great opportunity for the SGC and counsellors to provide much needed leadership.

### **Possible Solutions to Address POP**

There is one caveat to any solution for this Problem of Practice (POP): all solutions have to address the organizational and educational shift to a personalized learning environment. This means that students are at the centre of their learning and understanding how this relates to their post-secondary decision-making. In addressing all students, any solution must account for different learning styles and approaches, a variety of assessment options, varying methods of communication and ways that students can reflect on their learning. The role of the guidance counsellor as educator is important in this role. Yet without key data or metrics of how well or how poorly the current ICS process functions, it is difficult to know what exactly should or needs to change or even if it will be better. Each counsellor at ICS may have their opinions of what and how things should change based on extensive experience at ICS and in guiding students.

There are four solutions presented, the first being to maintain status quo. The next three solutions are not mutually exclusive and could be combined in the final solution as an encapsulation of all that will be done to significantly change how students are academically advised. In this way the solutions provide a step-by-step analysis of how they may morph or evolve into a personalized learning methodology. The first proposed solution provides the impetuses and foundational structure for change in the SGC towards a personalized academic advising culture. It is difficult in a small school like ICS to enact change on a large scale in a

short period of time so each solution on its own could be looked at in a step-by-step progression. A structured progression would also allow for the use of surveys and the analysis of each step to determine progress as well as the impact of challenges that arise.

### **Solution 1: Status Quo**

As an educator, the counsellor must provide opportunities to grow understanding in a personalized learning environment that often involves learning outside the traditional classroom. From today's guidance model at ICS of significant human support to somewhere in the distant future where students could have a personal educational assistant that uses Artificial Intelligence to guide and help make decisions, it is imperative that guidance counsellors take the lead in the adoption and development of these solutions or they could find themselves outmoded (Hamlin et al., 2016; Johnson et al., 2010; Savitz-Romer, & Liu, 2014). Guidance counsellors are professionals at the intersection of students and information. They have the skills and knowledge needed to provide students with the factors in decision-making that are relevant to each and every student in a personal manner. Guidance counsellors at ICS provide tremendous access for students to information on post-secondary decision-making (Appendix D). What is lacking is students knowing what to do with that information, how to process and what it means to the student and why. Essentially, what is lacking in the process today is the teaching of decision-making. As the process analysis revealed the solution for better decision-making should be on a continuum from Grade 9 through 12 and more and better ways of supporting students in decision-making should be developed by counsellors.

One of the specific leadership competencies for whole system improvement put forth by Fullan and Quinn (2016) is that it challenges the status quo. There are a few issues with maintaining the status quo for academic advising at ICS. For congruence and coherence, it is vital that the SGC follow the Head's lead in creating an academic advising system that is personalized.

Research espouses change toward a more personal experience that develops more student ownership and agency in the process (Fullan & Quinn, 2016; Zmuda et al., 2015). This system would have the student as the central driving force-utilizing digital technology innovatively and more effectively and efficiently. Another issue is that there needs to be more feedback that is vital for effective student learning and the process for post-secondary decision-making (Fullan & Quinn, 2016; Ontario Ministry of Education, 2016; Zmuda et al., 2015). For example, it has been mentioned that students are making satisficing or simplified post-secondary decisions. At ICS it is currently difficult to process decision-making with students to deepen their understanding of decision-making. What is rarely discussed with students is which factors to consider and how to weight them in their decision, let alone how to decide if the choice reflects their interests and personality profiles developed in Grade 10.

Feedback on the process of post-secondary decision-making, on the role of the SGC, or to the students throughout the process in a collaborative manner is currently not mandated in the ICS system. Students need collaborative feedback from counsellors, advisors and parents that is timely and pertinent in addressing their questions, comments and ideas throughout the post-secondary decision-making process. This feedback loop provides continual understanding of the current thought process of the student and what is influencing their thoughts or ideas at that time. This feedback also allows for further input factors that the student may be missing for a deeper decision. Feedback is also needed on the effectiveness of the academic and post-secondary decision-making process provided to the students. The status quo at ICS does not address how students develop effective decision-making skills that are desperately needed in the process (Govan et al., 2006). This is a significant gap when students are provided with copious amounts of information, but no method with which to process it. Finally, there have been calls for



guidance counsellors to improve services to students by providing additional modes of service delivery, not just standard individual counseling sessions (Domene, et al., 2006).

### **Solution 2: Personalized Online Careers Course**

Probably the simplest solution would be to move the Grade 10 careers course to a digital platform and online learning environment that is highly personalized for the student. Currently there is one guidance course, Exploring Careers, in the Grades 9-12 curriculum mandated by the provincial ministry that teaches subject matter pertaining to post-secondary decision-making (Anonymous, 2019b). The course outline provides a focus on jobs in society and what pathway students need to follow to achieve careers. It also provides students with opportunities to discover essential skills and work habits for successful employment. Students also have an opportunity for hands-on experiences as they investigate occupations of interest through experiential learning opportunities. This course is intended to help students make plans for continued learning and work.

There are many practical real world skills in Exploring Careers. It provides an opportunity for students to create a resume, practice interviews, look at future trends and understand what a post-secondary education could do for them. Currently at ICS teachers, not counsellors, in a traditional classroom setting and method, teach the Grade 10 careers course. The problem with this course is that it is in Grade 10 and the research shows that many students are not yet ready at this point to fully understand their future beyond secondary school. (Domene, et al., 2006; King, et al., 2009; Sciarra & Ambrosino, 2011) It is also a matter of learning for all students, an advocacy piece, as it has been shown that boys may be less able in Grade 10 to grasp the concepts of post-secondary decision-making (Domene, et al., 2006).

Developing the Exploring Careers course in an online learning environment would help solve some of the fundamental issues with the current course. It is important to fully utilize the

Grade 10 careers course so it has more of a lasting effect in Grades 11 and 12. The work in this course needs to be shared with counsellors; advisors and parents to fully engage the student's decision-making process and this could be done more effectively in a digital realm. It would provide multiple methods of learning to best suit the student's learning style as well as many entry points to learning and a variety of assessment types. The course would eventually be non-traditional in that the student could start and complete the course over 14 months online, between the end of Grade 9 to the beginning of Grade 11 solving the issue of students in Grade 10 who may not yet be ready for careers education. This time frame would allow for the maturation of some students in understanding the content and context of the course and make it more relevant to students when they enter Grade 11. The information, especially interest and personality profiles, completed in this course are vital to future decision-making and could be shared in future grades by being shared online (King, et al., 2009).

This program would follow the three strands of deep learning outlined by Fullan and Quinn (2016). "These are precision in *pedagogical partnerships* that engage students in co-designing authentic relevant learning, *learning environments* that foster risk taking and 24/7 connections, and *leveraging digital* so it accelerates learning." (Fullan & Quinn, 2016, p. 90) Leveraging digital in this model aligns with personalized learning in that it connects students with a wide range of authentic audiences and experiences (Zmuda et al., 2015). It also provides learning that is at a manageable scale for the student and encourages independent learning based on the student's learning path. This course would be designed to get the student out of the classroom and into the world. It will utilize many facets of the digital world to bring students closer to real people in real work experiences so they can understand better what is available. It will also seek to connect them more to ICS alumni who are a tremendous resource of what possibilities and opportunities are available and how to navigate real world pathways.

Many resources are already available at ICS to develop this course. This course would be built using collaboration between teachers, counsellors and students, which are so vital to success (Fullan & Quinn, 2016; Zmuda et al., 2015). The SGC would provide the lead as counsellors to fully integrate the course. Current teachers would be imperative for their knowledge, as would various Directors responsible for experiential learning and character development within the school. Finally students would be consulted for their input to the course and its relevance to them.

### **Solution 3: Implementation of a Grade 11 Guidance Course**

This solution will seek to propose and implement a Grade 11 guidance course, which is not mandatory by the ministry, but would be for ICS students. Traditionally counsellors at ICS have not recommended courses however, if counsellors are to take a leadership role in the school this would be an appropriate time to do so. This course would provide further structure to the post-secondary decision-making process for students at ICS. Research demonstrates that on the whole students are better able to comprehend post-secondary decision starting after Grade 10 (Dietsche, 2013; King et al. 2009; Sciarra & Ambrosino, 2011). The course would follow from and utilize the same structure and methodology as the Grade 10 guidance course, being digital, available anytime and accessible from multiple entry points and assessments. This course will be inquiry based, leading students with practical and authentic questions that provide guidance. The key to this course is feedback to the students from guidance, advisors and parents, specifically on their post-secondary decision-making.

Fullan and Quinn (2016) state that accountability in the Coherence Framework is important. A Grade 11 guidance course would allow for more accountability on the students part to keep working toward their post-secondary decision and accountability for the SGC to fully monitor student progress in this regard and provide timely feedback.

**Solution 4: Comprehensive Personalized Academic Advising Learning Environment**

The Head of ICS has mandated that the school be a personalized learning environment. There is much research and many movements toward personalized learning, however, there are little written about providing academic advising or post-secondary decision-making support for students that aligns with personalized learning. There is a great deal written in reference to teachers providing a personalized mastery learning environment and how leaders and administrators within education can provide and support teachers in this realm. If guidance services and counsellors are to be relevant to students in a personalized learning environment than they should also be aligned and coherent with the ethos of personalized learning. Yet there is little research on what this looks like. In her 1992 work, in 1992, Martha Ray recognized that counsellors needed to be more in touch with new technologies for guidance and little has changed in the interim according to Pierce (2012). “Few K-12 school counsellors use technology in their professional lives, despite the numerous digital guidance and counseling resources available.” An integrated personalized digital umbrella environment supporting the student in their academic advising and post-secondary decision-making is urgently needed.

Currently, there is a gap between the decision-making skills of students, as digital citizens, and the ability of guidance services to present information to them. Although counsellors, teachers, parents and advisors have good intentions in supporting students in their progression through high school and toward post-secondary decision-making, they are disparate in when and where they occur and at times disconnected. A comprehensive solution would look to provide the student with the digital tools necessary to build their decision-making capacity and for many internal and external stakeholders to collaborate in this learning. Although it is in essence a portfolio, that would gather artifacts of learning across high school, it is much more. It would include input from counsellors, advisors, parents and teachers. It would also include

external partnerships in the community and outside ICS that are so important to the process (Fullan & Quinn, 2016; Zmuda et al., 2015). Again the key to any design would be consistent and timely feedback to the students in their progress and decision-making process.

It is important that the process of student decision-making is a collaborative exercise bringing various stakeholders together in the student driven process (Fullan & Quinn, 2016). The factors for change are already in place at ICS and are vastly underutilized and they would be very high yield (low cost, high impact). Although many people at ICS are doing good work there is no overarching mechanism that teaches or guides the student in the actual process of decision-making or what process is best for a student. Currently at ICS, there is a great deal of information given to students and they must find how those pieces fit together best. The primary repository of information related to the decision-making and discussions surrounding post-secondary decisions are separate and in siloes depending on who is connecting to the student and at what time in the process. The SGC uses paper files that are locked in a filing cabinet and referred to when a student has a meeting, the advisor program uses Google docs, there are many discussions that happen that are not tracked and parent input has no place in the system even though parents may be the most influential in the career decision-making process. External partnership growth and tracking current external stakeholder relevance information has no consistent place in the current system. Alumni discussions, university visits, university representative visits, guest speakers, career day, work place visits, and volunteer opportunities all occur for ICS students but are all isolated aspects that are not obviously tied back to a decision-making reflective process. This information is not made evident to all people involved in the process of post-secondary decision-making for students or whomever students want involved in that process.

Solution 4 tries to fully engage the student in their decision from Grade 9 through graduation. To make sustained improvement in students' learning there needs to be an explicit

framework or model that guides the learning (Fullan & Quinn, 2016). Currently there is no explicit framework at ICS for post-secondary decision-making. A comprehensive personalized academic advising learning environment seeks to effectively implement a longitudinal portfolio based solution, which allows for input by students, teachers, advisors and parents. Portfolios are mandated by the provincial education ministry as a tool for student success but have not yet been successfully implemented at ICS.

Another advantage of this solution is that it serves to implement new digital tools and resources that are relevant to the process of academic advising and decision-making. These tools will provide opportunities for students to track their thought processes. They will also be integrated to provide access to information on post-secondary options in a format chosen that best satisfies each student's personal understanding and learning. The development of this process would again be lead by the SGC with significant collaboration. The system would be built through time starting with a group of Grade 9 students and building with them as they work through high school. Students would have input to the system. It would also provide built in surveys and reviews by students that could provide improvements but more importantly track student satisfaction with their decision-making abilities.

Four possible solutions have been proposed for this OIP (see Table 2). Together all four solutions would provide a comprehensive system for academic advising and post-secondary decision-making at ICS. However, there are limitations to scope and agency, time and financial resources that require a decision toward one solution that will have the most impact. There are three ways in which this impact should occur. First, the greatest impact has to be on the students and how they can make deeper decisions about their future after ICS. Second, the solution should also be congruent with the new vision toward a personalized learning environment at ICS. Finally, the solution needs to establish how the SGC and counsellors can effectively provide

leadership in this new personalized learning environment. The new personalized online careers course covers all three-impact areas and will be the proposed solution for this OIP.

Solution	Process	How	When	Personalized
1. Status Quo	Information Processing, Traditional Methods, Ad-hoc, No Decision-making Framework	Classroom, Individual and Group Meetings, No set pedagogy or curriculum	Grade 10 - 12	No - Teacher and Counsellor Driven
2. New Careers Course	Digital, Introduce Decision-making Framework, Collaborative	Online, Collaborative curriculum	End of Grade 9 to beginning of Grade 11	Yes - Student driven, Counsellor and Teacher as guide, Parent/Alumni/Advisor feedback
3. New Guidance Course	Digital, Solidified Decision-making Framework, Collaborative	Online, Collaborative curriculum	Grade 11	Yes - Student Driven Counsellor as guide, Parent/Alumni/Advisor feedback
4. Academic Advising Personalized Learning Environment	Digital, Comprehensive student exploration framework, Collaborative	Hybrid, Portfolio Based	Flexible, could be introduced throughout school	Yes – Student Driven, Counsellor and Teachers as guides, Parent/Alumni/Advisor feedback

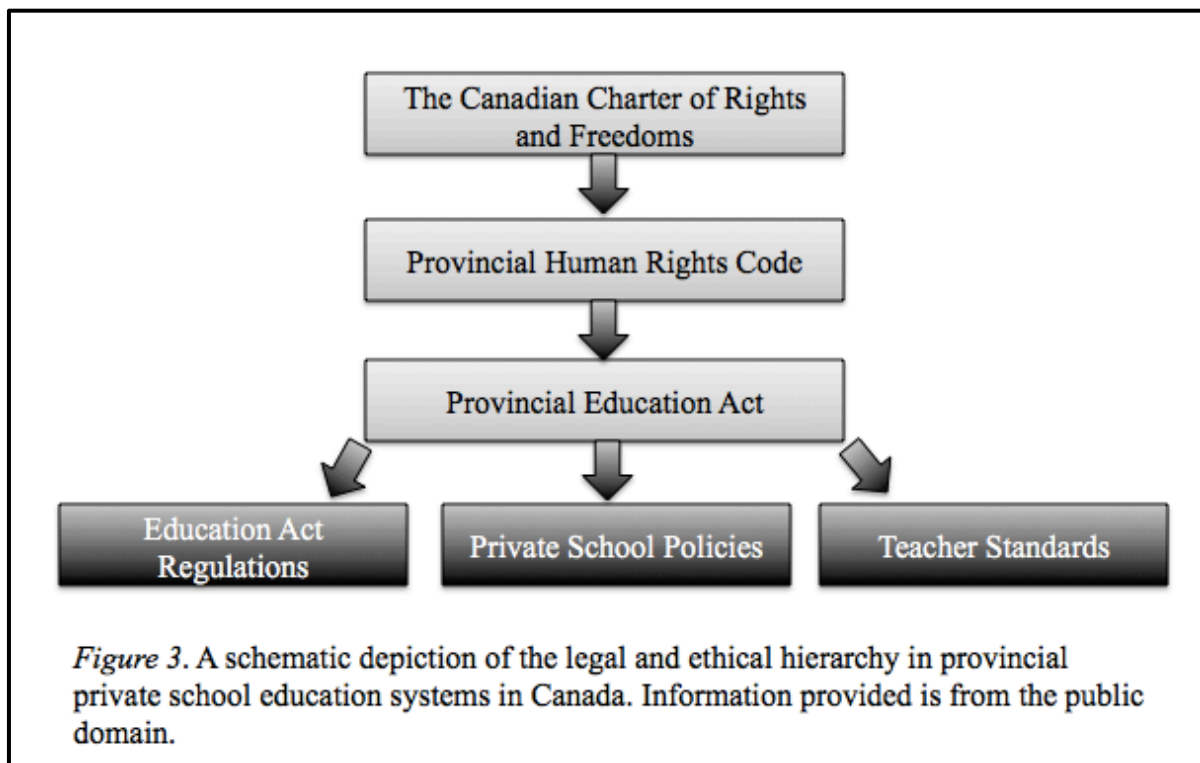
*Note:* Summation table comparing the four possible solutions for ICS' OIP.

### **Leadership Ethics and Organizational Change Issues**

The ethical underpinning of this OIP is that all students, no matter their gender, race, culture, or academic standing, must have an equal opportunity to make a deeper decision of what to do after secondary school. According to Tuana (2014) this ethical motivation has three components, moral purpose, moral courage and moral hope. Teaching requires a moral purpose but the changing and often difficult school environment challenges it. But each one of these components, especially moral hope, is not just a belief but also a disposition to act on behalf of all children. One would think that a moral and ethical imperative would be a truism based on the

laws established in Canada that govern education and protect children, but this is not always the case.

In Canada, educational laws and policies are the responsibility of each province as granted by The *Constitution Act* of Canada 1982 and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The Charter of Rights and Freedoms is the preeminent document in the hierarchy pertaining to ethics and the treatment of all people including children. In each province there is a Human Rights Act that further establishes the rights of people within the province and then an Education Act making provisions for how children are to be taught and treated within the school system. Additionally there are Education Act Regulations, Policy and Program Memorandums and then School Board Policies. These laws provide the rules and regulations pertaining to the treatment of children in Canada, the provinces and each education system thereof. Further, there are ethical guidelines pertaining to the actions of people within the education system. Figure 3 is a depiction of a legal and ethical hierarchy in education in Canada.





ICS is governed by the Education Act in the province and operates as a private school under that umbrella. As a private school that relies on parent tuition to operate the reputation and moral standing of the school is paramount. That is why at ICS all employees are expected to exceed the standard of care in this Education Act. As pertaining to this OIP, the ethical and moral standards of guidance counsellors as leaders in organizational change and student interaction are important. This OIP is only concerned with those guidance counsellors who are also certified teachers, not professional social workers or psychologists who have their own professional standards. In many provinces guidance counsellors were teachers before they moved into the role of counsellor.

Each province has a governing body for teachers, as example the Ontario College of Teachers. This body governs registration, duty, ethical standards, regulations, education and any oversight of misconduct. In most cases the provincial ethical standards provide guidelines for care, respect, trust and integrity. Becoming a guidance counsellor in a school required a teacher taking a set of certification courses. Even though each province has a counsellor association, few provinces have strong regulations in place for school counsellors (Canadian Counseling and Psychotherapy Association, 2014). That is why the code of ethics for teachers in each province is the foundational codes for counsellors. If ethical codes are provided provincially for counsellors in schools they are similar to those of teachers and relate to care, dignity and integrity of people in a counseling relationship. For example, in Nova Scotia, the following are the ethical behavior in guidance and counseling practice codes:

- “respect for the dignity and integrity of persons,
- responsible caring in counselling relationships,

- responsibility to society.” (Canadian Counseling and Psychotherapy Association, 2014, p. 10)

Canadian laws have always governed schools. These laws provide for the highest care for students by teachers and educators. There are severe penalties for teachers if they fall outside of these laws. Educators are held to the highest ethics as professionals interacting with students. There is also a constant moral commitment to provide the highest quality of education to students under your care. Teacher and guidance organizations in Canada also provide ethical guidelines for their interactions in the education system. These laws and codes of ethics govern ICS as a private school and the work and solutions in this OIP fall under these Canadian guidelines.

With all the laws in Canada designed to provide for and protect students educators should have a moral purpose or greater calling. Given the degree of care and trust provided a guidance counsellor they must have intrinsic moral agency to do what is right (Tuana, 2014). Tuana (2014) shares that the intrinsic ethical values are for human life, happiness and flourishing students. In what is the most important decision for the student of what to do after high school it is imperative that the counsellor provides a moral compass. Tuana (2014) underlines that identifying ethical values is key to moral literacy in the process of decision-making and in this OIP student’s post-secondary decision. Each and every student has different values, such as culture, academics and family as examples, which lead them to different judgments about right and wrong actions (Tuana, 2014). That ICS has in its mission the purpose of preparing students for university means that counsellors need to be aware of ethical sensitivity and any biases, blind spots or community prejudices that may be present in the school (Tuana, 2014).

In this OIP students are being asked to be more involved and lead the process of post-secondary decision-making. This OIP has described many influencers and factors affecting the decision-making process. Often parents, peers, friends and even teachers have opinions of what is

best for the student after high-school that can affect the student positively or negatively. These stakeholders are often part of the “team” that supports the student in their decision. The counsellor must provide for moral intensity training to help students identify the nature of the disagreement and help them better appreciate the source of their disagreement (Tuana, 2014) “Teamwork without tolerance of difference in opinion, gender, racial, or cultural background is unacceptable” (Ciulla, 2014, p. 100). The navigation of these differences is where the guidance counsellor provides the moral compass. They can support the student in who should have a say in their decision and why and they can also help students generate and evaluate options for actions (Tuana, 2014).

Of course students may identify some post-secondary choices that are clearly wrong however, it is important that ethical counsellors help students assess why it is wrong (Tuana, 2014). This is not about counsellors being nice; students need to hear the truth. Unrealistic goals of students need to be addressed as in the long run they do not provide the necessary self-esteem for empowerment, they just provide false hope (Ciulla, 2014). Ethical motivation of students by counsellors requires moral purpose, moral courage and moral hope (Tuana, 2014). The relationship between the counsellor and their student is still a power relationship. Counsellors must not give away their power to guide and help the student but more importantly, they must not take the power away from their students (Ciulla, 2014). So although the process of post-secondary decision-making needs to be personalized, guidance counsellors are still needed in the process to ethically empower students.

To empower students, guidance counsellors must be leaders who are sincere and authentic (Ciulla, 2014). This aligns with the cultural shift of ICS to one of Clan in the Competing Values Framework (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). ICS as an organization wants its teachers and counsellors to have a “genuine” feeling about the school, the people they work with and the students they

serve (Ciulla, 2014). What empowers people in an organization is the reciprocal moral agreement that comes from a genuine relationship (Ciulla, 2014). This is also the premise of the transformational leadership model (Leithwood & Sun, 2012). In a personalized learning environment the counsellor student relationship is a moral relationship built to empower the student. “Without honesty, sincerity, and authenticity, empowerment is bogus and it makes a mockery of one of the most cherished values, the freedom to choose” (Ciulla, 2014, p. 102). The value of the student’s freedom to choose their post-secondary destination and the ethical support of their guidance counsellor is the ethical foundation of this OIP.

### **Conclusion**

Chapter 2 utilized a Congruence Model (Nadler & Tushman, 1999) for change in academic advising and the work done by counsellors and a coherence leadership perspective for the SGC. Through the analysis of the organization and the gaps exposed in the current system it is evident that change needs to occur to meet the cultural and strategic change to a personalized learning environment. There is an opportunity for the SGC at ICS to build a comprehensive personalized academic advising system to better meet the changing needs of our students. This system starts with Solution 2 – a new personalized online Careers course. This change will be a process that occurs over time and surveys students and other stakeholders to make sure it serves our students well. Chapter 3 will highlight more specifically how this will get done.

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

This chapter will outline the progressive steps on the change process for academic advising in a personalized learning environment at ICS. The change option selected for this OIP, a personalized online Careers course, will be outlined and explanation given as to why it is the preference of choice. Since this change will represent the first online and fully personalized course at ICS there are many aspects of the planning and implementation process to be addressed in this chapter.

#### **Introduction**

This change process involves many different elements such as; internal ICS requirements for change, alignment with the Coherence Framework (Fullan & Quinn, 2016) and Personalized Learning (Zmuda et al., 2015) preferred by the school; external accountability and input; and the building of a school team. The change will involve two different processes, the applied and the administrative. The applied process involves building the new personalized online Careers course. This build will follow Provincial Ministry Curriculum and have extensive pedagogy, curriculum and technology development. The administrative process involves communication, surveys, assessment and evaluation, research and future changes to the course based on the data collected. The choice of a new personalized online Careers course is the first step in the larger process toward a fully integrated personalized academic advising system that may contain the other change options from Chapter 2.

#### **Change Implementation Process**

Traditionally teachers developed a course at the school in which they taught. Although all courses follow the mandates of the Provincial Ministry curriculum and what is required to teach in that specific course, the teacher still had some flexibility in what was taught and how they approached the course. In other words, the teacher personalized the course, as it was their course.

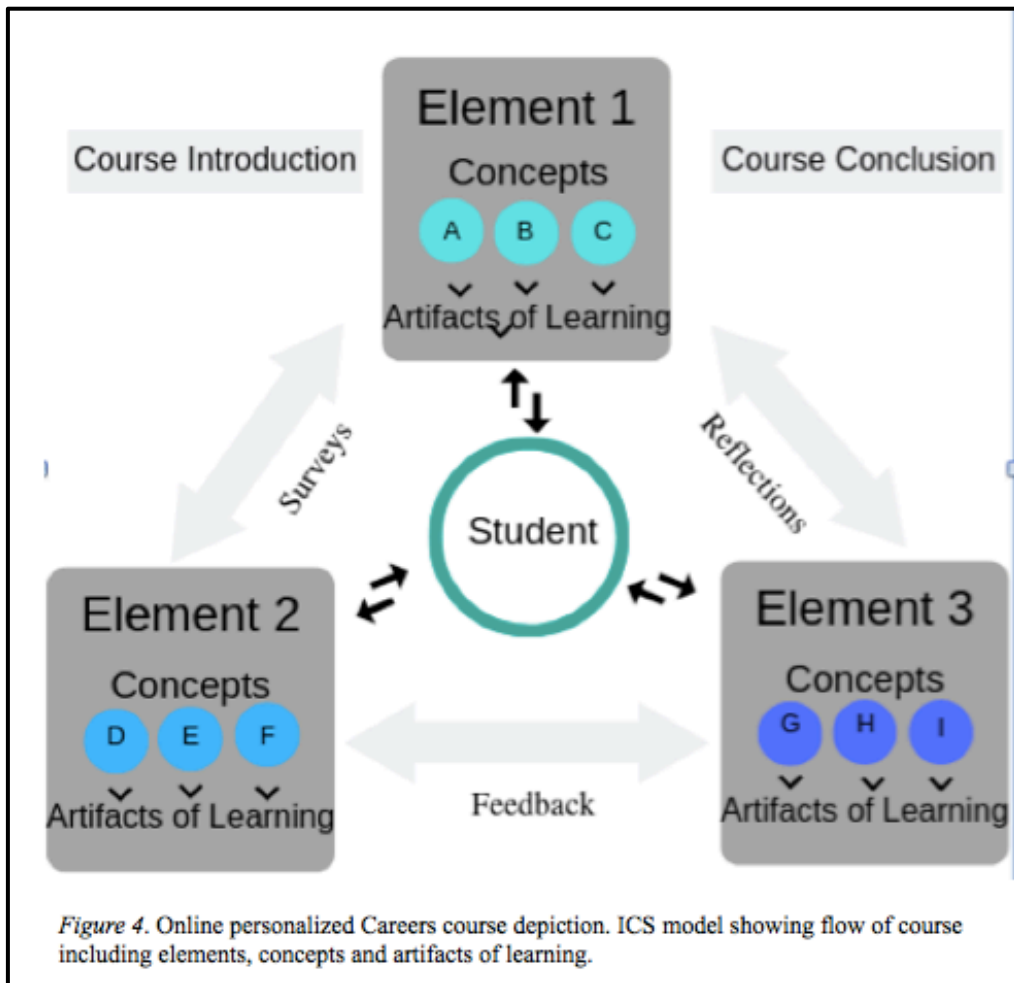
The personalized online Careers course change implementation process at ICS represents a major pedagogical and curriculum shift, not only for the students, but also for the teacher, in the teaching and learning.

**The personalized online Careers course.** In Zmuda et al.'s (2015) definition of personalized learning, which is used extensively at ICS, the course is now personalized for the student. It forms the basis of personalized learning that may be different for each student and how they approach the course. With multiple points of entry for each component of the course, there are endless possibilities for the course as it moves forward. The personalized online Careers course in this way is more organic and requires a different way of teaching. Students have input in the design and flow of the course. In this way ICS is designing a personalized online Careers course that is specific to ICS, is unique to each student and in which teachers are coaches, facilitators, directors and guides.

The communication of this philosophy to teachers involved is important, as their collaborative involvement in the build of the course from the beginning requires this common philosophical understanding. Teachers also must be able to adapt and excel in the new environment for the success of the course. Again, a growth mindset, (Dweck, 2006) will be important for teachers in this course build, as development will take time. Later in this chapter, the ways in which growth requires feedback and surveys will be discussed as part of a continuous improvement process. (Shakman et al., 2017). The collaborative efforts of teachers involved in the development of the course and their understanding of the process will be important for success.

Figure 4 is a graphic representation of the personalized online Careers course. Noticeably the student is at the middle of the course as they are the key figure in a personalized learning environment. From the middle the learner can move in any direction through the curriculum

components. These components are called Elements and Concepts in this model, depending on the province they could be called strands, or outcomes, and they provide the content structure for the course. For example, Elements may be Self Exploration, Career Possibilities, or Managing Oneself. Within each Element area are Concepts, also known as units, which represent the specific areas of exploration for the students. The Concept areas represent items such as resume building, interview skills, interest inventories, personality inventories, career exploration, and post-secondary research as examples. The arrows radiating from the student to the Elements represents their inquiry and reflection through the process.



This is not a linear progression course. Students are free to move between Elements and Concepts according to their interest and motivation. For example, students may well want to start

with producing a resume, Element 2, Concept E on the figure. The resume concept will be provided in various forms for student diversity and interest such as; video, document form or LinkedIn exploration. Once they explore and reflect on their resume they may well choose to see what job interests them at that point and how it relates to future careers which is at Element 3, Concept G. This is not a linear course, nor is it a teacher lead course. Teachers have input into the structure and content of the Elements and Concepts of the course during the first build, guided by evaluations from the current course and input from external experts. Also, by building the course in this way it provides opportunity for each Element and Concept to be surveyed by students and data for the continuous growth and improvement of the course. Reflection, feedback and surveys are built in at various stages of the course for monitoring and evaluation purposes.

### **ICS Requirements for Change**

The choice for the online course as the first step is intentional in two ways. First ICS requires innovation in online courses, which this proposal will attempt to accomplish. This plan offers an example of a fully online and personalized course for the school, satisfying the new vision. Second is the requirement for personalized learning. An online course should initiate a personalized post-secondary plan for students and move the SGC away from a legacy system. Counsellors will move into the classroom to teach the online course demanding new learning requirements. Teaching a dynamic online personalized course will require leadership and risk-taking skills for the counsellors, which should be motivating and rewarding.

There is an opportunity for ICS to test these new online personalized course concepts in a fairly risk free environment of a guidance course that is less academic in nature. It is hoped that lessons learned by counsellors, students and administration in this course can be transferred to other ICS online courses in the future and their teachers. The implementation of this course is important for the overall post-secondary decision-making change because it provides a



mechanism for feedback from students that deliver data that is focused on student need. The initial solution to the POP is provided by delivering a personalized learning environment framework that can test and deliver the factors/conditions that impact the post-secondary decisions of students.

ICS requires documentation of a Five Year Plan for change implementation. In effect the first school year, 2019-2020, of the five-year plan for the purposes of this OIP will be spent on planning the implications of the personalized online Careers course option in the overall structure of academic advising and personalized learning at ICS (see Table 3). This relates to the development and implementation of the course into the curriculum at ICS, collaborating, building the course, developing surveys, building capacity and gaining coherence. It will also be spent formulating and writing the five-year plan.

One of the first requirements in the five-year plan for this course will be to map the curriculum. This will insure that the course satisfies the overall goals of the school and the Ministry of Education in the province, a major stakeholder. In effect this mapping is a monitoring tool to insure Ministry requirements are met. The mapping will look at the flow of the overall Elements in the course and also the specific Concepts. ICS has used available software mapping tools in the past however, the school is developing a new mapping tool and this course may be the first course to use the new system. The mapping of this course will also provide input as to where and how ICS implements further Career plans across the whole school, K-12. This allows for the planning of future resources and supports needed in various divisions.

Table 3

*ICS Five-Year Plan for Online Course*

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Grade 9	Traditional Careers on timetable as a course selection  Create 5 Year Plan  Map Curriculum	Launch Hybrid Careers course selection process.	Fully Personalized online Careers course selection process	Fully Personalized online Careers course selection process.  Start Implementing Changes to Postsecondary Decision-making Process Based on Survey Feedback	Fully Personalized online Careers course selection process.  Adjust Postsecondary Decision-making Process Based on Survey Feedback
Grade 10	Traditional Careers on timetable.  Student Survey of Traditional Course	Traditional Careers on timetable  Incorporate online modules in Hybrid Environment  Survey Students Adapt Course Based on Survey Results	First Year of Fully Online Course  Survey Students Adapt Course Based on Survey Results	Second Year of Fully Online Course  Survey Students Adapt Course Based on Survey Results	Third Year of Fully Online Course  Survey Students Adapt Course Based on Survey Results
Grade 11		Survey Students One Year Out for Impact of Traditional Course on Post-secondary Decision Impact.  Adapt Post-secondary Decision-making Process Based on Results	Survey Students One Year Out for Impact of Hybrid Course on Post-secondary Decision Impact  Adapt Post-secondary Decision-making Process Based on Results	Survey Students One Year Out for Impact of Fully Online Course on Post-secondary Decision Impact  Adapt Post-secondary Decision-making Process Based on Results	Survey Students One Year Out for Impact of Fully Online Course on Post-secondary Decision Impact  Adapt Post-secondary Decision-making Process Based on Results
Grade 12			Survey Outgoing Grad Students for Impact of Traditional Course and SGC Process for Post-secondary Decision-making	Survey Outgoing Grad Students for Impact of Traditional Course and SGC Process for Post-secondary Decision-making	Survey Outgoing Grad Students for Impact of Traditional Course and SGC Process for Post-secondary Decision-making

*Note.* Initial proposed document for five-year plan for an personalized online Careers course. This document was used to gain internal accountability at the SLT and Head of School level at ICS (Csinos & Poplar, 2019)

Over a five-year period there may well be some aspect of academic advising and career planning growth that will be made apparent by planned feedback and surveys that require course adaptation. This course is meant to be evolving over time to be most effective to students and their personalized academic planning. With so little research on the topic of an personalized online Careers course it will be difficult to know what works best. As the course develops it will have to be a testing ground for adaptation and change for a better-personalized and impactful academic advising system for students. Some things will be trial and error, like including Alumni, in providing information for students. Counsellors must be open to learn through this process.

### **Stakeholder Reaction to Change**

There are many stakeholders impacted by this OIP however, the focus of all stakeholders must be on deeper learning in students toward their post-secondary decision-making. Focusing direction for internal stakeholders, teachers and directors is less of a concern because ICS has been moving toward a personalized learning environment for two years now. During the current school year teachers showed some evidence of personalized learning in their classroom as part of their growth plans. The process of demonstrating evidence and artifacts of personalized learning in the classroom has been formalized in the Faculty and Staff Improvement Plans for teachers this year. So current instructors of the traditional Careers course in the school are well aware of personalized learning.

The process of moving this OIP forward will mean increasing or focusing more on some areas of coherence and personalized learning than others, primarily ones that involve cultivating collaborative cultures and securing accountability. This course now takes a direction that brings together a collaborative school team that will be involved in the development and implementation of the course. The team should involve current teachers of the course, guidance counsellors and

Directors and of course students. It will provide evidence in regards to clarifying strategy, gaining accountability and achieving the end goal of creating an online course through a collaborative process. This group could also identify some of the issues that may arise with the development of this OIP. Fullan & Quinn (2016) have produced a Coherence Assessment Tool (Appendix E) that tracks evidence of each of the four factors of the Framework. An assessment will be important through the first five-year plan.

**Teacher compensation/motivation.** ICS is one school and the online course will be new for ICS. Often one of the issues in starting something new is compensation for those involved. Compensation is a difficult concept and reality in this type of situation. Faculty at ICS get paid according to the teacher rate negotiated for the local Board of Education plus a certain percent more. So faculty at ICS are making more than teachers in the local public education system. It could be said that with extra pay comes an extra responsibility, especially in a prestigious private school, to be a better teacher that gives extra for students both inside the classroom and in extra curricular activities. So the development of a new course will demand extra time and effort from those people already in the building who already have a full course and workload. There is a small stipend provided to teachers as part of a Continuous Learning Program at ICS. This pays teachers a small amount for work done towards school improvement and innovation.

Motivation to be involved in the leadership of a new and unique course development process that greatly enhances the deep learning of students is a key accountability premise for those who will be directly involved in the construction of the course. In a transformational model of leadership, there are leadership opportunities for people throughout the organization (Bass, 1999). Teachers are second order transformational leaders who must take the vision of personalized learning from the Head and collaborate to implement it for the students. This OIP is predicated on the notion that teachers at ICS want to be seen as leaders in education, in providing

a dynamic, deeper learning experience for their students. This course will be unique in its presentation and pedagogy. ICS will provide supports and resources for this project to be successful.

Over the past few years ICS has provided unique and opportunistic professional development opportunities for teachers to provide for enriched personalization in their courses. For this OIP school team professional development opportunities will be provided by outside agencies such as ABC Online School, whose work will be discussed later, and attendance at conferences specific to personalized learning, online education and careers education. The ultimate compensation for teachers undertaking this project will be intrinsic, they will be seen as leaders in education who provide a personalized, deeper learning experience for students which is the goal for the team. A reward will be to take a team to a major educational conference where they will present this course, our findings, the success and challenges and how it successfully impacts students. This presentation will be a key part of the conclusion of the five-year plan.

**Students and meaningful stakeholder relationships.** The one stakeholder that is crucial in this OIP is the student. As the learner, the student is at the centre of this approach that is personalized, competency based, and student-driven. ICS is a quality school and in quality schools meaningful relationships, ones where teachers truly understand each student, are vital to student success and deeper learning. With so much technology in their lives students have so much access to information. A teacher's personal understanding of the student is important. This is why teachers needed to shift from content provider to a guide who empowers students (Martin, 2018). The philosophy of meaningful relationships is shared amongst many current researchers (e.g., Fullan & Quinn, 2016; Geurin, 2017; Martin, 2018; McEachen et al., 2018; and Zmuda et al., 2015).

Even in an online environment ABC Online School, an expert provider of online learning, recognizes that the relationship between the student and teacher is the basis for successful learning to occur. “The philosophy of ABC Online School is not new and one that they believe is inherent in all quality schools and that is to build authentic relationships (Anonymous, 2019a).” ABC’s online course and curriculum is designed backwards from the learner and it is why ICS is looking at a technology and teacher education partnership with them that will be outlined later. ICS needs experts in the field that have established online and personalized learning experiences that will support teachers and student learning through the change process.

### **Technology as a Resource and Implementation Issue**

Technology plays a significant and crucial role in the implementation of the personalized online Careers course and further to the overall effectiveness of academic advising for students (American School Counselor Association, 2017; Fullan & Quinn, 2016; Pierce, 2012; Zmuda et al., 2015). ICS is significantly advanced in their use of technology. They have instituted many applications where students may work in the digital world, other applications where they use digital tools in the real world and also many opportunities for the two to meet somewhere in the middle. This middle is called a hybrid system. There are many basic administrative and educational systems that have been using technology for years and are well established in the school. The school has been using one-to-one computer access for students in the Senior School for a number of years. All teachers in the Senior School are using available courseware systems to provide curriculum to students online. Communication outside of the classroom between teacher and students occurs online. Weekly newsletters to parents and employees of ICS go through email and are available online. The school has also established next gen areas of the school to drive innovation by students. For example, the school has 3D printers and digital cutters

for various technology based applications. However, there has not been a fully implemented online course at ICS.

Any online course needs an appropriate technology system to deliver the material. This is known as the courseware management system. Finding the right system for the online careers class is a critical component in the first year of the project. There are many products on the open market and many teachers at ICS have been using products like Google Classrooms. There are also products that could be purchased, like Blackboard that has been used in the school in the past. However, each one of these products has limitations for teachers and students in the development, implementation and use in an online personalized learning environment. Finding the perfect system for the course will be difficult but it is imperative to find the best system that could move the course forward over the next five years. It could well be deflating and a moral killer for teachers if they need to adapt to a new system on a year-to-year basis. The transfer of course material and curriculum to a new system is often difficult and time consuming.

Technology also plays an important role in the monitoring and evaluation of the change and development process of the course itself. The five-year-plan includes many opportunities to survey students and these surveys will be done digitally through the course portal. This allows for easier data collection and analysis. Given that the course is personalized, and students will approach the course in their own way, surveys will be coming in at different times for different Elements and Concepts. Technology will make this process easier to manage.

ICS has been exploring a partnership with an outside provider of online courses based on a personalized model called ABC Online School. ABC Online School has an online operating system that has been in use across North America for a few years and adapted over time. There are many benefits to enhanced use of technology and how partnerships with outside agencies for this OIP would help enrich personalized learning. For example, the two outside partnerships or

stakeholders that relate to technology use in this OIP do so in different ways, one as a provider and one as a user, they are the ABC Online School and our Alumni.

### **External Stakeholder Collaboration**

ICS has an opportunity to collaborate with two different and distinct external stakeholder groups. Collaboration is important as it provides real world input into the classroom and also expertise in technology use and online personalized learning.

**ABC online school.** ICS has partnered with ABC Online School for three years. ABC Online School is a non-profit supplemental educational organization that provides courses and programs for students and adult learners (Anonymous, 2019a). ABC Online School has provided supplemental high level online courses for those students at ICS who are looking for a more enriched program that the school cannot provide. ABC Online School has also provided training for teachers at ICS in how to design an online learning course using the ABC Online School philosophy.

Significant to this OIP, ABC Online School uses technology to facilitate learning in an innovative manner. Teachers will harness the power of technology to chart a new direction for content sequences, academic proficiencies, and student agency. ABC uses a classic model of constructivist learning appropriate to this OIP to promote student agency, which makes student learning relevant, hands-on, and inquiry-driven (Anonymous, 2019a). The online Careers course at ICS will be innovative in its approach, as students are provided with the capacity building skills to measure their knowledge and skills, and then given choice in what and how they learn. The emerging tools of personalized teaching and learning increase efficiency and effectiveness around necessary aspects of personalized learning such as differentiation and remediation that are critical for student success. ABC shares the fundamental personalized philosophy with Zmuda et al. (2015) that student choice increases engagement, and engaged students learn more.



Although ICS is a co-educational institution ABC Online School's expertise in gender specific approaches to personalized learning could be beneficial (Anonymous, 2019a). Their gender work is backed by research-based practice from groups such as the National Coalition of Girls' Schools. When developing courses for girls' they add four pillars to the personalized learning approach: Connection, Collaboration, Creativity, and Application. Courses for boys are built from their personalized learning framework and add three core values—Trust, Meaning, and Character—that tie closely to effective research-based practice in traditional boys' school learning environments.

One of the aspects of Coherence Framework is securing accountability and that external accountability is used transparently to benchmark progress (Fullan & Quinn, 2016). ABC Online School provides this accountability. In their professional development programming, they collaborate with schools in developing best practice approaches both in the classroom and in their operations. ABC Online School will share with ICS the pedagogical approaches that they have developed for their student courses so that ICS can leverage their work to empower learning and transform ICS's personalized learning pedagogy. ABC Online School also works with organizations such as National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS), the National Business Officers Association (NBOA), the International Association for K-12 Online Learning (iNACOL), and state/regional and international independent school associations to inform their partner schools (Anonymous, 2019a). ABC Online School provides this OIP with expertise and experience in online learning that could expedite and enhance the product and ultimately the personalized learning environment for students.

**ICS alumni.** ICS is consistently working on establishing a connection between Alumni of the school and current students. As a private school, Alumni connections are vital as they provide support for the school in three ways; one is donations in the future to their alma mater, two is

volunteer support for events within the school, and the third and most important to this OIP is mentorship. More importantly to this project Alumni have been through the process of choosing their post-secondary option and have an outlook that may be important for current students. For example, if an Alumnus went from ICS to the University of British Columbia they could be connected in some way, shape or form online to provide valuable information. In this way the current student is provided with more mentorship and support and possible ties to people in the future.

There are a myriad of ways in which this could occur from Alumni videos, a school social media site or some sort of messaging system. This type of connection and communication cannot be static and needs constant updating as current students become our Alumni at various Universities and will have new and current information. The amount of work involved in keeping this type of system updated and current could be taxing and overwhelming for a teacher. The collaboration of the Alumni Relations Coordinator in the school would be imperative in this context. This person has not been in an effective curriculum role in the past so they would need an understanding of the positive aspects of this relationship and how they would support, implement and be responsible for updating relationship building on a continuous basis. There are still a number of answers needed as to what is the most effective way to move forward with external agencies in a personalized online learning environment, but there is much strength to build on.

Eventually the whole personalized online Careers course at ICS will be new including processes, pedagogy, delivery, tools and technology. It will be built on the Congruence Model (Cawsey et al., 2016) with input from the Coherence Framework (Fullan & Quinn, 2016), Swanson's (2007) Guiding Questions and the Competing Values Framework (Cameron & Quinn,

2011). How the development and change process for the course unfolds over time will be important to monitor. How the course impacts student learning will be formally evaluated.

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

The personalized online Careers course may never be a static entity again. It is developed to always try and meet the needs of its current students. Education quality in this regard means continuous development and improvement (Cheng & Tam, 1997; Shakman et al., 2017). There are many aspects to monitor and evaluate for this OIP (see Table 4). However the monitoring and evaluation divides into many areas of the change process. At the macro level, first, the change to the initial fully online course and second, the implications of the course to the overall process of academic advising is important at a school level. Third, the development of the course itself, the micro level, and the Elements and Concepts within that course has to account for a personalized learning environment. Finally, the evaluation of the course in context with the bigger academic advising process may also occur.

<b>What</b>	<b>How</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Type</b>
Personalized Learning	Evaluation	Ongoing	Board and Head	Research
Academic Advising Change	Monitor	Ongoing	SGC	Research
Old Course	Evaluation	2019/20	Students, Teachers	Surveys
Online Course Development	Monitor	Five year plan	School team	Swanson Questions
Course Changes	Evaluate	Continuous Improvement	Various Stakeholders	Surveys, Feedback
Elements and Concepts Development	Monitor	2019/20 Ongoing	School Team Students	PDSA – Four Key Steps Swanson Questions Surveys
Course Content; Elements and Concepts	Evaluate	Every 2 months	Students School Team Stakeholders	Survey Student Artifacts
Technology	Monitor	Annual	School Team Students	Research Surveys
Entire Online Course	Evaluate	Every 6 months Annual	School Team, Directors, Head of School	PDSA - OFIP Swanson Questions Student Artifacts Markers Survey Results

*Note:* This chart includes monitoring and evaluation based on OIP five-year plan and continuous improvement.

Providing a better, more congruent, output in the form of a more comprehensive and deeper post-secondary decision for ICS students is this OIP's focus (Nadler & Tushman, 1999). That is why it is pertinent to review the guiding questions proposed for this OIP as they relate to the overall monitoring and evaluation of the change process. The primary focus of Swanson's (2007) questions is on the student; the critical central construct for personalized learning (Zmuda et al., 2015). These questions afford a simple method of on-going communication for the school team implementing the change. They deliver feedback and dialogue about the change process,

why things are being done and how they support the school's goals. They also provide an opportunity for communication between various stakeholders in framing the context for change over time as the course develops.

Swanson's (2007) four questions have been adapted here to relate specifically to ICS and the implementation of a new personalized online Careers course.

1. Will each student make a deeper post-secondary decision after taking the personalized online Careers course?
2. Will the advising and/or post-secondary decision-making process work better after the students take the course?
3. Will the SGC perform better after instituting the course?
4. Will ICS perform better after instituting the course?

The school team will use Swanson's (2007) questions to monitor each Element and Concept being introduced to the course and how they will benefit the student. As the course evolves it will need consistent and constant monitoring and assessment as it changes and adapts. Student surveys and feedback will provide impetus for change yet Swanson's questions can be applied at each stage of development to monitor any change that is suggested and that it will provide a deeper learning for the student. ICS supports that implementation and development of an on-going continuous change process, rather than a one-time event (Cheng & Tam, 1997; Dweck, 2006; Fullan & Quinn, 2015; Shakman et al., 2017; Zmuda et al., 2014).

The five-year plan outlines that the students taking the traditional course will do a formal evaluation of that course and its components through the use of surveys. It is in the second year of the plan that the new online course will be rolled out to the students for the first time in hybrid form, meaning online but with traditional classroom teacher support. This series of assessments of the old course will provide the team with an understanding of the importance, impact, failings

and quality aspects of the course. These assessments will also provide the baseline for impactful change and how it, hopefully, serves students better and deeper. This participatory monitoring and assessment supports the voices of the least powerful stakeholder, the student, and their perspectives, preferences and ideas (Rossman, 2015).

Students take the careers course once, so while they are evaluating the course based on their perceptions, the changes made due to their evaluations will directly affect future students. This leads to the importance of the opportunity for longitudinal assessment of the course. As can be seen on the five-year plan, there is an opportunity to survey students who have completed the course and are still in the school, in grades 11 and 12. This hindsight evaluation is important. The third through fifth years of the plan will be used to survey students in the course but also other stakeholders such as teachers, parents, advisors counsellors and alumni, either directly or indirectly involved with the course, to understand how the course can be improved from their differing perspective. These surveys will be used to provide impetus for further change, update the course, get external accountability and validate the change process.

What the monitoring of the course and its Elements and Concepts shows, and what the five-year plan highlights, is that this is a process of continuous improvement for the online course. “Continuous improvement is a process that can support educational stakeholders in implementing and studying small changes with the goal of making lasting improvement.” (Shakman et al., 2017) It also aligns with necessary feedback loops for course development and change over time. The ICS students who participate in the continuous improvement process will help identify specific problems, develop proposed solutions, (including new or revised tasks, processes, or tools); help test them in real time within the course; collect and study data on their effectiveness; and then make decisions based on what they learn (Shakman et al., 2017). This continuous improvement allows students to engage in systematic inquiry and ultimately be the

evaluators of the Careers course. Continuous improvement uses a systematic approach, like a Plan-Do-Study-Act Cycle (PDSA), that requires practitioners to be deliberate in how they test and evaluate changes (Shakman et al., 2017).

### **Plan-Do-Study-Act Cycle**

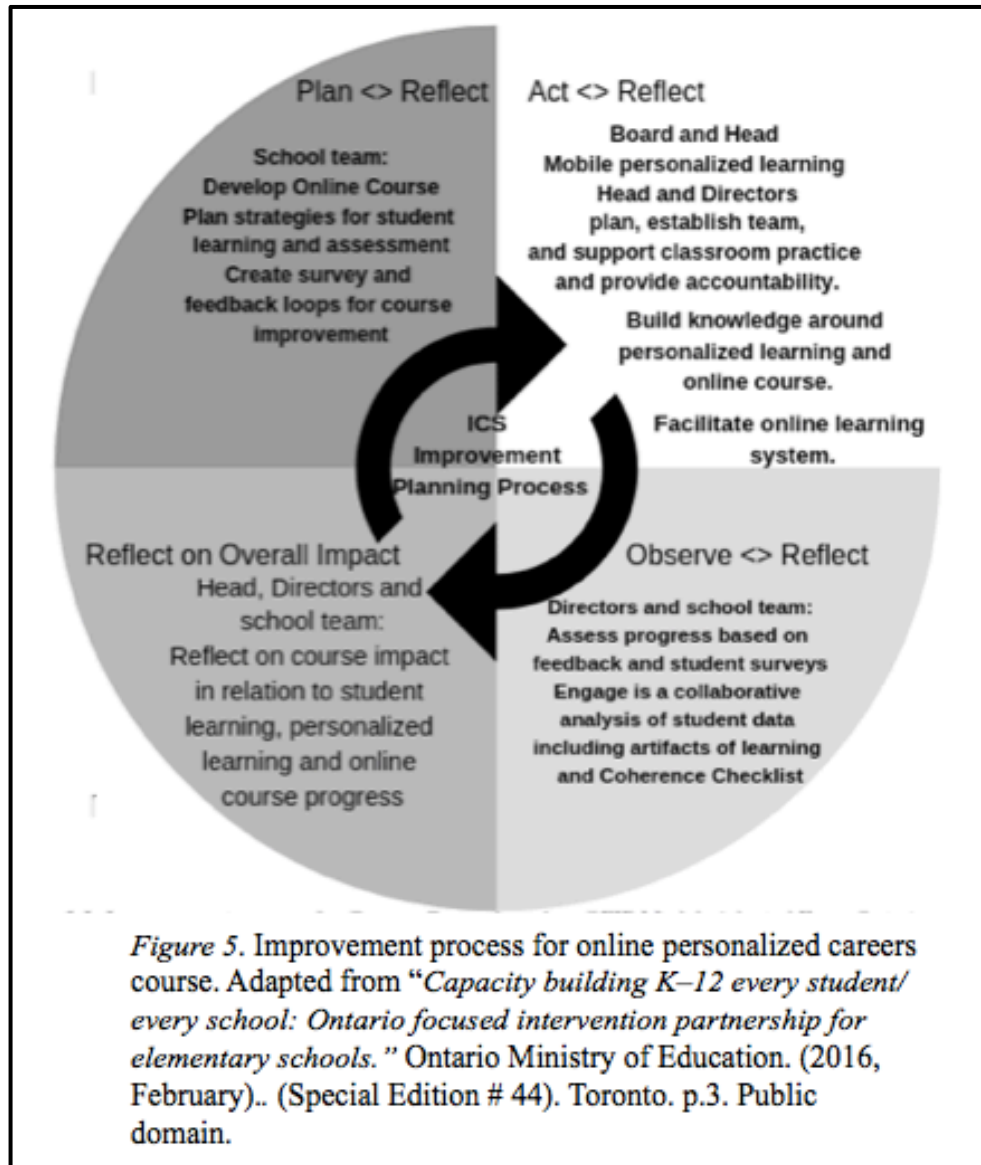
The beginnings of the PDSA cycle can be traced back to Walter Shewhart in 1939 with his cycle: specification-production-inspection (Moen & Norman, 2006). According to Moen and Norman (2006), W. Edwards Deming's work throughout the 1950s modified Shewhart's cycle into a plan-do-check-action, or PDCA, cycle. The Japanese used this cycle in the 1950s and '60s in their manufacturing to monitor quality control. Deming continued refining and developing the model until he introduced a more abbreviated PDSA cycle in 1993. Over time, the PDSA cycle became known as the "Model for Improvement" and was broadened to include strategies and methods to develop, test, and implement changes that would result in improvement (Moen & Norman, 2006).

Two PDSA models that will be outlined for their success and impact on real-world change on education are the Ontario Ministry of Education's (2016) Ontario Focused Intervention Partnership (OFIP) (Appendix F) and also The Massachusetts Department of Education's "Theory of Action" (MDoE) (Hanover Research, 2014) (Appendix G). The OFIP has been in operation for 10 years with great success and although the purpose has not changed it has evolved from a centrally directed initiative to one that is now more locally developed and defined. This fits well for ICS, as we are a single school. The OFIP and the MDoE will be used in the bigger context of academic advising in a personalized learning environment plan at ICS and its relationship to the online Careers course.

The MDoE model and the OFIP have many similarities as PDSA frameworks and how they relate to this OIP and implementation of the personalized online Careers course. Both models were initiated with school improvement planning process as its central tenet and to improve schools through capacity building and effectively facilitate school improvement efforts (Hanover Research, 2014; Ontario Ministry of Education, 2016). Capacity building in the OFIP focused on the teachers within the school as agents for change. The OFIP strategy from the very beginning was an equity strategy, ensuring each and every student was successful. Both models involved some form of improvement planning, setting of strategic priorities, target setting, data-based decision-making, and the monitoring of the implementation process itself (Hanover Research, 2014; Ontario Ministry of Education, 2016). They provide examples of definitions for monitoring and assessment to be used in the form of a question, similar to Swanson in this OIP.

Both frameworks provide examples of a PDSA fitting into the Continuous Improvement cycle (Shakman et al., 2017). They provide collaborative frameworks which is central to school change and leadership in the Coherence Framework (Fullan & Quinn, 2016) and also personalized learning. The development and implementation of a personalized online Careers course at ICS is but one part of the change that is planned for post-secondary decision-making and ultimately changes within the school. The PDSA of the OFIP provides an overriding monitoring and evaluation process for school improvement and the personalized learning change at ICS represented in this OIP. Figure 5 has been adapted from the OFIP to represent ICS' nomenclature and its organizational structure.





Over the years of use of the OFIP Framework five common themes have emerged (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2016). These themes are also common to the Coherence Framework (Fullan & Quinn, 2016), personalized learning and ABC Online School (Anonymous, 2019a) model. These five themes relate directly to the building of a new and unique personalized online Careers course and the overall need for change to the post-secondary decision-making process for students at ICS. Although all five themes require monitoring to varying degrees throughout the process three themes, 2, 4 and 5 outline specific monitoring goals for this OIP.

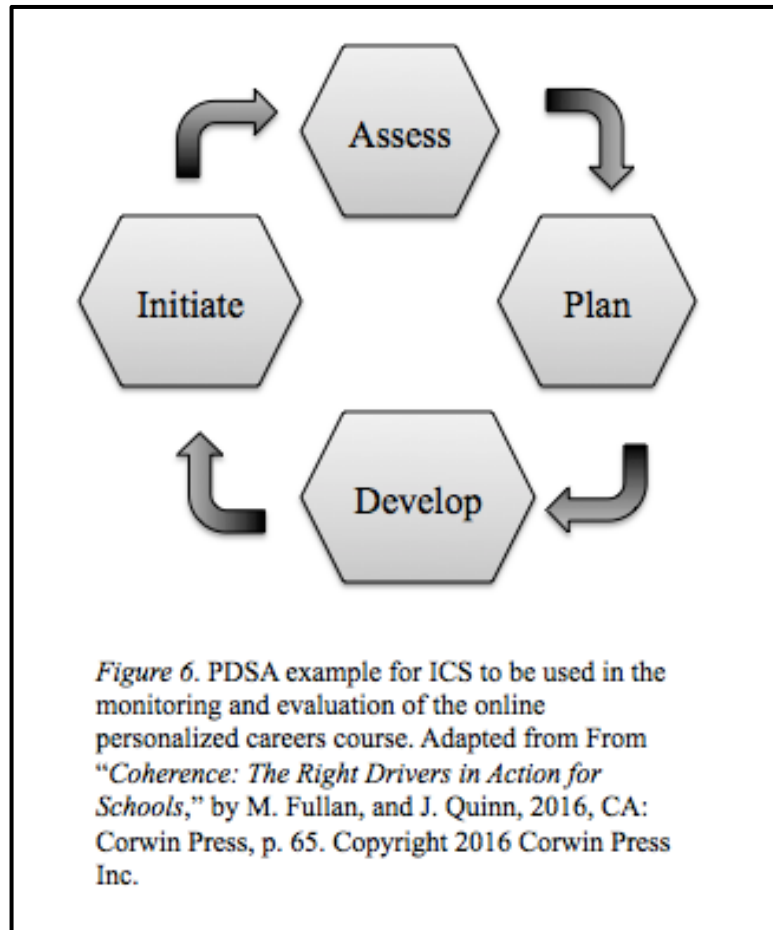
The second theme, that *holding the belief that all students can learn and acquiring a deep understanding of student learning needs* relates to deep learning in this OIP (Fullan & Quinn, 2016; Zmuda et al., 2015). The OFIP relates to the work of Jim Cummins (2006) who suggested that holding high expectations is not about making the work of learning "more difficult," but rather about making it more engaging through relevance and personalization (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2016). Theme five is about *connecting professional learning needs to student learning needs at the classroom level*. This is important for ICS because the professional learning needs of the teachers, while undertaking the development of a new personalized online career course, will meet the students' needs online. This will require monitoring by the school team of the learning and pedagogy being developed and implemented and specifically that it deepens student learning in a personalized learning environment.

Theme four is about *focusing on effective literacy and mathematics programs, including the teaching of higher-order thinking and problem-solving skills*. This OIP will not be doing mathematics programs but it is about the effective literacy skills of students around Careers, universities, colleges, GAP years and post-secondary decisions, which are crucial for the deeper understanding of students and ultimately better and more informed decisions. Ethical literacy will be a formal part of the process (Tuana, 2014) This OIP is all about higher-order thinking and problem-solving skills. The ultimate problem that students need to solve is what they will do after high school as the next step in life.

The Ministry has stated that all OFIP schools undergo a collective journey of transformation through this change process. This OIP strives to change and expect more from students in their post-secondary research and decision-making. The OFIP provides input as to assessment data used by OFIP teams both from traditional measures, such as EQAO and diagnostic assessments, and from classroom-based approaches, such as pedagogical

documentation. ICS does not undertake standardized testing as is done in Ontario through EQAO. Pedagogical documentation and student artifacts of thinking and learning are important assessment tools for this OIP. OFIP schools are monitoring their own practices from one year to the next through observations, conversations and artifacts of student work. This monitoring process determines if changes in practice are having the intended impact on student learning. They are asking questions similar to Swanson's; Steven Katz asks, "Are we focusing on the right inch? Are we doing the right work?" (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2016, p. 6) Components of the OFIP are important to this OIP because ICS will also monitor their own practices from year to year, drawing on conversations, observations and student work to determine if changes in practice are having an impact on student learning.

To monitor and evaluate the personalized online Careers course specifically a more simplified PDSA will be used. Fullan and Quinn's (2016) Four Key Steps are a PDSA that provides for collaboration in the inquiry process. The process of inquiry as a collaborative process involving Swanson's questions will be used to develop each Element and Concept of the course. These four key steps were adapted in Ontario for school improvement and is known as the critical learning instructional path (Fullan & Quinn, 2016). This Collaborative Inquiry will be used in the construction of the online, personalized, Careers course. Specifically, it will be used to create each Element and Concept and the artifacts to be developed. ICS will also use four stages for its PDSA as shown in Figure 6.



Applied to ICS the four key steps of ICS' PDSA would be applied as follows:

**Assess.** In the first year the collaborative school team consisting of internal teachers, counsellors, and students will gather and assess evidence of achievement from the current careers course to identify areas of development for the new personalized online Careers course. The team will assess pedagogical, curricular, software and technological aspects to meet the needs of the new course and new instructional practices.

**Plan.** The collaborative school team will plan and outline possible Elements and Concepts based on the Provincial Ministry standards; goals or outcomes for the personalized online Careers course and selects high-yield learning strategies. ABC Online School will provide needed professional learning for the planning of the course based on their expertise in online

course development and teaching and learning. This planning will be monitored. Initial possible artifacts of learning will be laid out for the initial phase.

**Develop.** The collaborative school team develops the Elements and Concepts in the new online personalized online Careers course. Appropriate artifacts of learning for assessment and evaluation purposes are co-constructed to be administered as culminating tasks. Teachers will collect these artifacts as samples of student work. The team will develop plans to provide scaffolding and adjustments as identified by the monitoring of the Elements and Concepts and the needs of the students.

**Reflect.** Reflection, feedback, surveys and monitoring are significant components of the development and refining of the course. Monitoring takes place as certain students are identified as “markers” and their progress are shared with the team (Fullan & Quinn, 2016). As part of the Continuous Improvement teachers and students will assess the appropriateness of the personalized instruction provided in the Elements and teachers will monitor the progress of the students. The team will provide scaffolding and adjustments as identified by the monitoring of the Elements. In the final stage the ICS collaborative school team conducts a moderation cycle using the collected artifacts. This is an evaluation point for the unit. The team will collaborate and assess the artifacts of the “marker” students and identify the next steps needed in the student learning and the continuous improvement of the course (Fullan & Quinn, 2016; Shaker et al., 2017). This is also where deeper learning is evaluated. Reflection from stakeholders will look at the effectiveness of the learning, student engagement, the high-yield strategies chosen and the next steps to be taken. This phase will identify ways to support those students who struggle in the unit and the data collected will feed back into the cycle again.

There are two uses for PDSA Cycles for monitoring and evaluation in this OIP. At the macro level the ICS and the SGC must continuously monitor and evaluate personalized learning

as it relates to the overall academic advising plan. Eventually this plan could include all the possible solutions outlined in this OIP in a comprehensive program. The best aspects of the OFIP and MDOE PDSA models provide excellent examples of how the monitoring and evaluation of this larger context could be applied. At the micro level, implementing the proposed solution of an personalized online Careers course, Fullan and Quinn's PDSA example outlined above provides a focused method of monitoring and evaluating the initial development and implementation of the course.

### **Plan to Communicate the Change and the Change Process**

There are many stakeholders at ICS, students, parents, teachers, alumni, Head, Board of Directors, Administration, ICS admissions, ABC Online School, and the education community in general, and the need to communicate effectively to each group will be important. Each group will require their own specific type of communication. There are also specific timelines for communication from the earliest demands within the school to the final communication to other schools in sharing our challenges and successes.

The Board and the Head have set the direction for ICS and one of the key strategies is personalized learning. This strategy has been in place for over two years and the faculty and staff at ICs have been aware of that strategy. It has been made apparent in many and various meetings with staff. It is also a key component of the faculty growth program for the 2018-19 school year in that faculty members must have evidence of at least one aspect of personalized learning in their course.

Collaboration is a key component of this OIP as it relates to personalized learning and coherence. A project of this scale requires that many people receive communication early in the process to get buy in, support and input. There is also accountability. This OIP is being driven from the middle, from the guidance counsellor perspective. There is administration above and

colleagues alongside this position that need communication at various times as they will provide feedback, approval and accountability. Communication as to the initiation, plan and progress of the course must go through those people on the organization chart of ICS who are above the guidance counsellor. Therefore, meetings very early with the Head of School, Executive Director of Technology and Innovation, Director of Academics and Director of the Student Guidance Centre are crucial. These meetings will seek to accrue Internal Accountability on a high level and provide support for the project going forward. These leadership people will be responsible for any shifts in teacher accountability and roles within the school. They will also be accountable for any budget implications of the project.

There are many people at the next level of the organization chart who need communication early in the project. To build the project communication must go to those teachers currently teaching the Careers course at ICS. They must be aware that there will be a change occurring in how the course is provided and taught. They will also be able to be a part of the team that is building the course. Their expertise in the curriculum as outlined by the Ministry is important for the successful transfer of the course to an online learning environment. Current teachers of the course will have one more year in which the course is taught in the traditional manner. It will be their responsibility to carry out the necessary surveys and gather data on the course as it currently stands. This provides the baseline data moving forward in how a traditional course compares to the new methodology being developed and implemented. It is also imperative to know what elements or concepts of the current Careers course are exemplar and may be easily adapted to the new online course platform.

October 2019 is when the new online Career course should be presented as a formal course for the upcoming school year. This is when the decision for courses for the 2020-21 school year is determined. ICS has a Communications Department that supports the marketing,

advertising, social media and print media production and distribution for the school. ICS' Communications Department will be responsible for any official notification of the new course. The communication of the Careers course change, its online nature and impact for students in Grade 10 will be done by the Communications Department and needs to be in place by December 2019 when the new academic calendar is presented to students and parents. The academic calendar contains all the rules and regulations and also the courses available for next school year. Having a course available online provides many different course selection opportunities for students.

Communication will also need to be planned for the change as students and parents will need to understand the implications of an online course. ICS is a non-semester school meaning that students take courses all year. ICS has two-day schedule with four academic blocks in each day resulting in the opportunity for students to take eight courses on a yearly basis. With an online course this means that students have the ability to fill another block and either move ahead in subject areas or take an additional course of interest. The communication of the benefits of the personalized online Careers course to students and parents at this time will be crucial for the overall planning of their high school academics.

In introducing something new to students and parents there are always those that are excited about the change and some that are hesitant and even resistant. Students and parents will provide internal accountability, in the Coherence Framework (Fullan & Quinn, 2016), as they are the customers of ICS and the ones currently in the school taking the course. Therefore, the marketing and communication of the plan to the students and parents is crucial. It will be the first time that students have a fully personalized course available to them. They have to be presented with the opportunities of deeper learning and more effective post-secondary decision-making.



They also need to see the possibilities that having an online course available to them allows within the overall scope and planning of their high school courses.

This will impact all students going into Grade 9 and 10. Historically, there have been 5-7% of students at ICS who have taken the careers course outside of the school either in the summer or online that may also be impacted (Anonymous, 2018a). These students wanted to clear time in their schedule and have more opportunities for course planning. This gives those students more opportunities within ICS and the possibility of staying within our school to acquire these opportunities. Although it is outside the scope of this OIP this could provide more curriculum opportunities for ICS. One of those opportunities could involve experiential learning in the form of co-ops or internships for students. The impact of the change on students at a school is often minimal. Students taking the old course for the last time will understand that a change is being made behind them, but it is of no direct impact. Students taking the new course for the first time will fully understand that the course is new and different and may wonder how that impacts them. Some may well crave for the old traditional style of course if they feel that they are not doing well or connecting with the new course. However, the further one gets from the change in course the more the issue of the change becomes less of a factor. Within two years students and parents will not know of any difference in respect to the change to an online learning careers course, as they did not experience the change. These means that some communication is one time explanation and marketing around the change and why it is occurring and some will be more systemic around why the course is online and the opportunities it presents to students.

There is also an opportunity for communication to Alumni. This communication, done by the Alumni Coordinator will provide a form of external accountability needed and outlined in the Coherence Framework (Fullan & Quinn, 2016). There is an opportunity for Alumni to be involved in the course and provide mentorship and information for current students based on the

Alumni's post-secondary decisions and career choices as was discussed. There is also an opportunity to explore the success of the course by having Alumni do surveys in regards to how effective the course was for them in their overall post-secondary and career success. Although the Career course will be designed and personalized by the student there is no other group more acutely aware of the needs of our students than those who most recently went down that path. Communication to this group in the form of seeking feedback and involvement is crucial for this course and should help facilitate the goals of Alumni engagement at ICS.

Once the new careers course is established and successful it will be important for the Communications Department to communicate to our community as a whole, Our annual school magazine that goes to all current families, alumni and staff, will accomplish this. A feature story on the success of the process will be important. The communications department will also support the team in the next steps in presenting this course success to the larger educational community. Presentation support for educational conferences will be important as ICS is seen as a leader in education. Being a leader in education may translate into more and better student candidates who wish to take advantage of a progressive personalized learning environment.

Communication will also follow internally as to what other courses may be personalized and online. This is a feedback communication loop that is crucial for the school. It allows for not only full time ICS registered students to take online courses but also students outside of ICS to take courses online and provide more revenue and growth for the school.

It is also important to communicate on a regular basis with ABC Online School. They also provide external accountability within the Coherence Framework (Fullan & Quinn, 2016). ABC Online School will continuously provide updates on current best practices and tools for use based on their extensive network of schools and courses. They will also be able to provide unbiased assessment of the course by an outside agency. They can also help facilitate the new

philosophy of an ICS course designed by the school and taught by teachers assigned by ICS. This is important to keep the brand of the course as it develops over time as an ICS course, irrelevant of the teacher who is teaching the course.

As an Independent School there are many stakeholders that need communication (see Table 5). This takes place at different times and stages in the process of developing and implementing a new course. ICS is fortunate to have a Communications Department to help with professional communications to many of our important constituents such as parents, teachers and alumni. ICS is a small school so internally it will be important to keep lines of communication open with teachers, directors and administrators throughout the process to be collaborative and for the change to be accepted and successful.

Stakeholders	When	How	What	Why
Head and Board	First communication, Ongoing	Meetings/Email	OIP Plan	Internal Accountability
Administration/Directors	Early, often	Meetings/Email	Five Year Plan Build Updates	Internal Accountability, Support, Collaboration
Teachers	Pre build	Meetings	Plan, build, support	Collaboration, Team Building, Coherence
ABC Online School	Pre build	Online Meetings	Support, Ideas	External Accountability, Collaboration
Students	December 2019	Communication Department, Meetings	New Course Outline and Implications	Internal Accountability, Collaboration, Planning
Parents	December 2019	Communication Department Methods	New Course Outline and Implications	Internal Accountability
External Community	After Year 2	Communication Department Methods	Success	Demonstrated Educational Leadership at ICS
Alumni	October 2019	Alumni Coordinator	New Course Idea, Involvement	External Accountability, Collaboration

**Conclusion: Next Steps and Future Considerations**

ICS has grown from a small school into a growing presence on the private school scene in Canada. Today, it finds itself in a good position based on solid decisions from the past. With a new Head comes a new vision to move the school in the direction of personalized learning. Although the discussion of personalized learning and a more relevant school environment for students has been happening for quite some time, the move to fully implement personalized learning throughout the curriculum is still a risk and a major project for the school. It is an opportunity for the SGC at ICS to take a leadership role in developing a personalized academic advising program for its students.

**Next Steps.** This OIP has gained significant traction within ICS as an opportunity to develop and implement a fully personalized online course, something that has never been done before. This is a major step and milestone for the school. There has been collaboration with a teacher of the current Careers course and myself to communicate the OIP proposal internal stakeholders on the SLT for accountability. Following the Coherence Framework (Fullan & Quinn, 2016) has allowed for internal accountability in the form of support for the project by the Head, the Director of Technology and the Director of Academics. There are three next steps to outline, first the creation of a five-year plan, second is planning to collect data through the process, and third is starting to implement the communication plan.

The first step is the collaborative creation of a detailed five-year plan and the mapping of the curriculum of a personalized online Careers course for Grade 10, as outlined earlier. These are requirements of ICS before starting the course. This plan and mapping need to be communicated back to the SLT members responsible for this project.

The second step is to ensure that the process is in place to gather data throughout the change and development stages to monitor and evaluate this course. It has been discussed that

feedback and survey loops are provided to the students in the course. These are important for the growth of the course over time and its relevance to students. It is also important to collect data on the development of the course and its impact on teachers. Personalized learning requires a different way of teaching and learning so monitoring teacher and student change through this process would be prudent for future projects. For this to occur the data collection process must be addressed early.

On a practical level, the third step is to initiate part of the communication plan in bringing teachers and counsellors up-to-date with the plan. There are teachers of the current course who need information. This step is important to get their buy-in to the project and become part of the collaborative school team that will move forward. There are also counsellors who are in support of the Grade 10 students in the school. Counsellors have been removed from teaching the current Grade 10 Careers course for some time now, which is thought to be a mistake amongst counsellors. Their expertise as counsellors has been missed in the course and has an impact on the department in the connection that the course gives us to the students. Current teacher and counsellor expertise and leadership will be foundational to the success of the course.

**Future Considerations.** There are two possible future considerations that have been made evident through this OIP process. The first consideration is the lack of research in Canada in relation to guidance in schools and its overall impact on students. The second is an internal ICS consideration of how academic advising and career exploration is provided and co-ordinated throughout the entire school, K-12.

In regards to the first future consideration, it has been stated here that there is very little research in Canada on the specific impact of guidance counsellors on post-secondary decision-making for students. The communication coming out of the research is that counsellors are overwhelmed. In a country like Canada where education, and specifically tertiary education, is

promoted as a positive influence on society the impact of guidance counsellors should be addressed and studied. In a more specific way, the research on academic advising and career counselling in a personalized learning environment is even more rare. Guidance in Canada has been trying for years to be more relevant and supportive of students. The recent Ontario School Counsellors' Association (2018) survey again demonstrated that counsellors are struggling to define their role and provide effective services to students. With a shift to a personalized learning environment, and also a progressively online world, researchers need to determine how guidance needs to shift with these changes to stay relevant for all students. ICS, with this OIP could be well positioned to lead in this area.

As for the second future consideration, ICS is a single school and needs to recognize how to better implement Careers education throughout the institution. An internal school team will implement the change for this OIP, and undertake the process for monitoring and evaluation and report back on its findings. Part of this monitoring and evaluation should look to understand where Careers education could be more relevant throughout the school, K-12. Research has shown that current students are not ready to make important post-secondary decisions until after Grade 10 (Blenkinsop et al., 2006; King et al., 2009). Future consideration at ICS should be given on how to change this pattern in students especially given that some students are at HTS for their entire primary and secondary educational career. This is how the SGC can continue to lead and further the work of this OIP so that students are well supported to make better, deeper decisions for their future.

### References

- American Gap Association. (2018). What's A Gap Year? Retrieved from <http://www.americangap.org/gap-year.html>
- American School Counselor Association. (2005). *The ASCA National Model: A Framework for School Counseling Programs - Executive Summary*. Retrieved from <https://www.schoolcounselor.org/asca/media/asca/ASCA%20National%20Model%20Templates/ANMExecSumm.pdf>
- American School Counselor Association. (2016). *Student-to-School-Counselor Ratio 2015-2016*. Retrieved from <https://www.schoolcounselor.org/asca/media/asca/home/Ratios15-16-LowesttoHighest.pdf>
- American School Counselor Association. (2017). *The School Counselor and Virtual School Counseling*. Position Statement. Retrieved from [https://www.schoolcounselor.org/asca/media/asca/PositionStatements/PS\\_Virtual.pdf](https://www.schoolcounselor.org/asca/media/asca/PositionStatements/PS_Virtual.pdf)
- American School Counselor Association. (2019). *ASCA School Counselor Professional Standards & Competencies*. Retrieved from <https://www.schoolcounselor.org/asca/media/asca/home/SCCompetencies.pdf>
- Anonymous. (2013). Provincial Ministry of Education website
- Anonymous. (2018a). ICS internal Board of Directors document
- Anonymous. (2018b). ICS school website.
- Anonymous. (2018c). ICS MFE internal document
- Anonymous. (2019a). ABC online school website
- Anonymous. (2019b). Provincial Ministry of Education curriculum documentation

- Bass, B. M. (1999). Two Decades of Research and Development in Transformational Leadership. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 8(1), 9-32. doi: 10.1080/135943299398410
- Blenkinsop, S., Crone, T., Wade, P., & Morris, M. (2006). *How Do Young People Make Choices at 14 and 16?* (Research Report No. RR773). Retrieved from National Foundation for Educational Research website: <https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/6449/1/RR773.pdf>
- Bolman, L. G., & Deal, T. E. (2013). *Reframing Organizations: Artistry, Choice, and Leadership* (5th ed.). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.
- Cameron, K.S., & Quinn, R.E. (2011). *Diagnosing and changing organizational culture: Based on the competing values framework*. San Francisco (CA): Jossey-Bass.
- Canadian Accredited Independent Schools. (2016, August). *CAIS Strategic Directions for 2013/14 to 2016/17*. Retrieved from [https://www.cais.ca/uploaded/About\\_Us/Policies/CAIS\\_stratdirection.pdf](https://www.cais.ca/uploaded/About_Us/Policies/CAIS_stratdirection.pdf)
- Canadian Accredited Independent Schools. (2018a). *What is Independent Education?* Retrieved from <https://www.cais.ca/families/what-is-independent-education>
- Canadian Accredited Independent Schools. (2018b). *About CAIS*. Retrieved from <http://www.cais.ca/about-cais>
- Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association. (2014). *Regulation for School Counsellors by Province*. Retrieved from [https://www.ccpa-accp.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/RegulationSchoolCounsellors\\_en.pdf](https://www.ccpa-accp.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/RegulationSchoolCounsellors_en.pdf)
- Cawsey, T. F., Deszca, G., & Ingols, C. (2016). *Organizational change – An action-oriented toolkit* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications



- Center for Disease Control and Prevention. (2018, September) *Data and Statistics About ADHD: How many children have ADHD?* Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/adhd/data.html>
- Cheng, Y. C., & Tam, W. M. (1997) "Multi-models of quality in education", *Quality Assurance in Education*, 5(1), pp.22-31, doi: 10.1108/09684889710156558
- Ciulla, J.B. (2014). The bogus empowerment of followers. In J.B. Ciulla (Ed.), *Ethics, the heart of leadership (3rd ed.)*, pp. 82-103. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO
- Clark, W. (2007). Delayed transitions of young adults. *Canadian social trends*. Statistics Canada, Catalogue No. 11-008. Retrieved from <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-008-x/2007004/10311-eng.htm>
- Creswell, J.W. (2007) *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*, (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). California: Sage Publications
- Csinos, B. & Poplar, S. (2019). *ICS (anonymized) Online Course Proposal Presentation*. Unpublished
- Curry, J. R. & DeVoss, J.A. (2009). Introduction to Special Issue: The School Counselor as Leader. *Professional School Counseling*, 13(2), 64-67. Retrieved from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23801086>
- Dietsche, P. (2013). Career Planning in-Ontario-Grade 10 Students: Counsellor Perspectives. *The Canadian Journal of Career Development/ Revue canadienne de développement de carrière*, 12(1), 4-16. Retrieved from <http://contactpoint.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/cjcd-vol12-issue1-full.pdf>
- Domene, J., Shapka, J., & Keating, D. (2006) Educational and Career-related Help-seeking in High School: An Exploration of Student Choices. *Canadian Journal of Counseling*, 40(3), 145-159. Retrieved from <https://cjc-rcc.ucalgary.ca/article/download/58780/44265>

- Drewes, T., & Michael, C. (2006). How Do Students Choose a University? : An Analysis of Applications to Universities in Ontario, Canada. *Research in Higher Education*, 47, 781-800. doi:10.1007/s11162-006-9015-6
- Dweck, C. S. (2006). *Mindset: The new psychology of success*. New York: Random House.
- Franciosi, S. (2012, September 24). Transformational leadership for education in a digital culture. *Digital Culture Education*, 4(2), 235-247. Retrieved from [http://www.digitalcultureandeducation.com/uncategorized/dce\\_4001\\_franciosi/](http://www.digitalcultureandeducation.com/uncategorized/dce_4001_franciosi/)
- Fullan, M. (2001). *Leading in a culture of change*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass
- Fullan, M., & Quinn, J. (2016). *Coherence: The Right Drivers in Action for Schools*. CA: Corwin Press
- Galbraith, J. (2014). *Designing Organizations: An Executive Guide to Strategy, Structure, and Process*, San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons
- Geurin, D. (2017) *Future Driven, Will Your Students Thrive In An Unpredictable World?* Missouri: Author
- Govan, G., Patrick, S., & Yen, C. (2006). How High School Students Construct Decision-making Strategies for Choosing Colleges. *College and University*, 81(3), 19-27. Retrieved from [https://www.aacrao.org/docs/default-source/c-u-.pdfs/mwfksl1wsvqjyybqubcr\\_cuj8103.pdf?sfvrsn=ce0121f2\\_0](https://www.aacrao.org/docs/default-source/c-u-.pdfs/mwfksl1wsvqjyybqubcr_cuj8103.pdf?sfvrsn=ce0121f2_0)
- Hallinger, P. (2003). Leading Educational Change: reflections on the practice of instructional and transformational leadership. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 33(3), 329-351. Retrieved from doi: 10.1080/0305764032000122005
- Hamlin, D., Hagen, C. D. & Watkins, E. (2016, March 17). Ontario's guidance counsellors: Spread thinly in an environment of growing expectations. *People for Education*. Toronto.

- Retrieved from <http://docplayer.net/34403801-Ontario-s-guidance-counsellors-spread-thinly-in-an-environment-of-growing-expectations.html>
- Hanover Research. (2014). *Best Practices for School Improvement Planning*. Retrieved from <https://www.hanoverresearch.com/media/Best-Practices-for-School-Improvement-Planning.pdf>
- Hargreaves, A. (2005). Educational change takes ages: Life, career and generational factors in teachers' emotional responses to educational change. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 21, 967-983. doi:10.1016/j.tate.2005.06.007
- Harrison Ross, L. (2012). *Learning to lead: Online learning principals' and counselors' perceptions of a district's virtual school support services and desires for professional development* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from Proquest Dissertations and Theses database. (Order No. 3525033)
- Johnson, J., Rochkind, J., Ott, A.N., & DuPont, S. (2010). *Can I Get a Little Advice Here? How an Overstretched High School Guidance System Is Undermining Students' College Aspirations*. (Public Agenda Report for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation). Retrieved from <https://www.publicagenda.org/files/can-i-get-a-little-advice-here.pdf>
- Keidel, R. (1995). *Seeing organizational patterns; a new theory and language of organizational design*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.
- King, A., Warren, W., King, M., Brook, J., & Kocher, P. (2009). *Who Doesn't Go To Post-Secondary Education?* (Final Report of Findings for Colleges Ontario). Kingston, ON: Faculty of Education, Queen's University. Retrieved from Colleges Ontario website: <https://www.collegesontario.org/research/who-doesnt-go-to-pse.pdf>

- Leithwood, K.A. (1992). The move toward transformational leadership. *Educational Leadership*, 49(5), 8-12. Retrieved from [http://www.ascd.org/ASCD/pdf/journals/ed\\_lead/el\\_199202\\_leithwood.pdf](http://www.ascd.org/ASCD/pdf/journals/ed_lead/el_199202_leithwood.pdf)
- Leithwood, K.A. & Jantzi, D. (2006). Transformational school leadership for large-scale reform: Effects on students, teachers, and their classroom practices, *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 17(2) 201-227. Retrieved from <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.475.86&rep=rep1&type=pdf>
- Leithwood, K.A. & Sun, J. (2012). The nature and effects of transformational school leadership: A meta-analytical review of unpublished research. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 48(3), 387-423. doi: 10.1177/0013161X11436268
- Martin K. (2018) *Learner-Centered Innovation: Spark Curiosity, Ignite Passion and Unleash Genius*. London, Impress LP
- McEachen, J., Fullan, M., & Quinn, J. (2018). *New Pedagogies for Deep Learning: 2018 NPDL Global Report*. Ontario, Canada. New Pedagogies for Deep Learning. Retrieved from: <http://npdl.global/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/NPDL-Global-Report-2018.pdf>
- McMahon, G.H., Mason, E.C. & Paisley, P.O. (2009). School counselor educators as educational leaders promoting systemic change. *Professional School Counseling*, 13(2), 116-124. doi: 10.5330/psc.n.2010-13.116
- Moen, R., & Norman, C. (2006). Evolution of the PDCA cycle. Retrieved from <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.470.5465&rep=rep1&type=pdf>
- Morin, A. (2019). *Developmental milestones for typical high-schooler*. Retrieved from Understood.org, <https://www.understood.org/en/learning-attention-issues/signs-symptoms/developmental-milestones/developmental-milestones-for-typical-high-schoolers>

- Nadler, D.A., & Tushman, M.L. (1999). The organization of the future: Strategic imperatives and core competencies for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. *Organizational Dynamics*, 28(1), 45-60. doi: 10.1016/S0090-2616(00)80006-6
- Nadon, D. (2014). *Perceptions of be(com)ing a guidance counsellor in Ontario: A qualitative inquiry* (Unpublished master's thesis). Faculty of Education, University of Ottawa.
- Northouse, P. G. (2016). *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (7th ed.). New York: Sage.
- Nova Scotia School Boards Association. (2014). *Shaping a new vision for public education in Nova Scotia. A discussion paper presented by the Nova Scotia School Boards Association*. Nova Scotia, Canada
- Ontario College of Teachers. (2018, November, 8) *Professional advisory: Supporting students' mental health*. Toronto.
- Ontario Ministry of Education. (2016, February). *Capacity building K–12 every student/every school: Ontario focused intervention partnership for elementary schools*. (Special Edition # 44). Toronto.
- Ontario School Counsellors' Association. (2018). *Role of the guidance teacher – counsellor survey 2018*. (Executive Summary Report). Toronto.
- Orem, D. (2016, Spring). Identifying opportunities. *Independent School Magazine*. Retrieved from <http://www.nais.org/Magazines-Newsletters/ISMagazine/Pages/Identifying-Opportunities.aspx>
- Peirce, M. (1994). *The university selection process: A Canadian perspective*. (Doctoral dissertation). Graduate Department of Education, University of Toronto, Toronto.
- Pierce, M. (2012, June). For school counselors, technology enhances the human touch. *The Journal*. Retrieved from <https://thejournal.com/articles/2012/06/07/for-school-counselors-technology-enhances-the-human-touch.aspx>

- Pleau, A. R. (2012). *Adolescent attitudes towards virtual learning*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from Proquest Dissertations and Thesis database. (Order No. 3525859)
- Ratts, M. J., DeKruyf, L., & Chen-Hayes, S. F. (2007). The ACA advocacy competencies: A social justice advocacy framework for professional school counselors. *Professional School Counseling*, *11*(2), 90-97. doi: 10.1177/2156759X0701100203
- Ray, M. (1992). *The college-choice process for high school students: An evaluation of high school counselor interventions and strategies*. (Doctoral dissertation, Florida State University). Retrieved from <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED350541>
- Rossman, G. B. (2015). *Participatory monitoring & evaluation*. University of Massachusetts at Amherst, Center for International Education. Retrieved from [http://www.umass.edu/cie/sites/default/files/Student\\_Resources/Participatory\\_ME.pdf](http://www.umass.edu/cie/sites/default/files/Student_Resources/Participatory_ME.pdf)
- Savitz-Romer, M., & Liu, P. (2014, July). Counseling and college completion: The road ahead. A summary report from the strengthening school counseling and college advising convening. Cambridge, MA. Retrieved from [https://www.gse.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/Counseling-and-College-Completion-The-Road-Ahead\\_0.pdf](https://www.gse.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/Counseling-and-College-Completion-The-Road-Ahead_0.pdf)
- Scarborough, J. L., & Luke, M. (2008). School counselors walking the walk and talking the talk: a grounded theory of effective program implementation. *Professional School Counseling*, *11*(6), 404-416. Retrieved from <https://www.schoolcounselor.org/asca/media/asca/Journal/Scarborough.pdf>
- Sciarra, D. T., PhD., & Ambrosino, K. E. (2011). Post-secondary expectations and educational attainment. *Professional School Counseling*, *14*(3), 231-241. doi: 10.1177/2156759X1101400307

- Shakman, K., Bailey, J., & Breslow, N. (2017, February). *A primer for continuous improvement in schools and districts*. Retrieved from Educational Development Center  
[https://www.edc.org/sites/default/files/uploads/primer\\_for\\_continuous\\_improvement.pdf](https://www.edc.org/sites/default/files/uploads/primer_for_continuous_improvement.pdf)
- Shillingford, M.A. & Lambie, G.W. (2010). Contribution of professional school counselors' values and leadership practices to their programmatic service delivery. *Professional School Counseling, 13*(4), 208-217. doi: 10.1177/2156759X1001300401
- Steele, T. M., Jacokes, D. E., & Stone, C. B. (2014). An Examination of the Role of Online Technology in School Counseling. *Professional School Counseling, 18*(1), 125-135. doi: 10.1177/2156759X0001800118
- Stone, C. B., & Dahir, C. A. (2006). *The transformed school counselor*. Boston: Lahaska Press.
- Stone, C. B., & Turba, R. (1999). School counselors using technology for advocacy. *Journal of Technology in Counseling, 1*(1). Retrieved from  
<http://jtc.colstate.edu/vol1%5f1advocacy.htm>
- Swanson, R. A. (2007). *Analysis for improving performance: Tools for diagnosing organizations and documenting workplace expertise*. Berrett-Koehler, San Francisco
- The Conference Board of Canada. (2014, June). *How Canada performs, university attainment 2014*. Retrieved from  
<https://www.conferenceboard.ca/hcp/provincial/education/university.aspx>
- Tuana, N. (2014). An ethical leadership development framework. In C. M. Branson & S. J. Gross (Eds.), *Handbook of ethical educational leadership*. (153-175). New York, NY: Routledge
- Universities Canada. (2018). *Universitystudy.ca, Canadian universities*. Retrieved from  
[www.universitystudy.ca/canadian-universities/](http://www.universitystudy.ca/canadian-universities/)

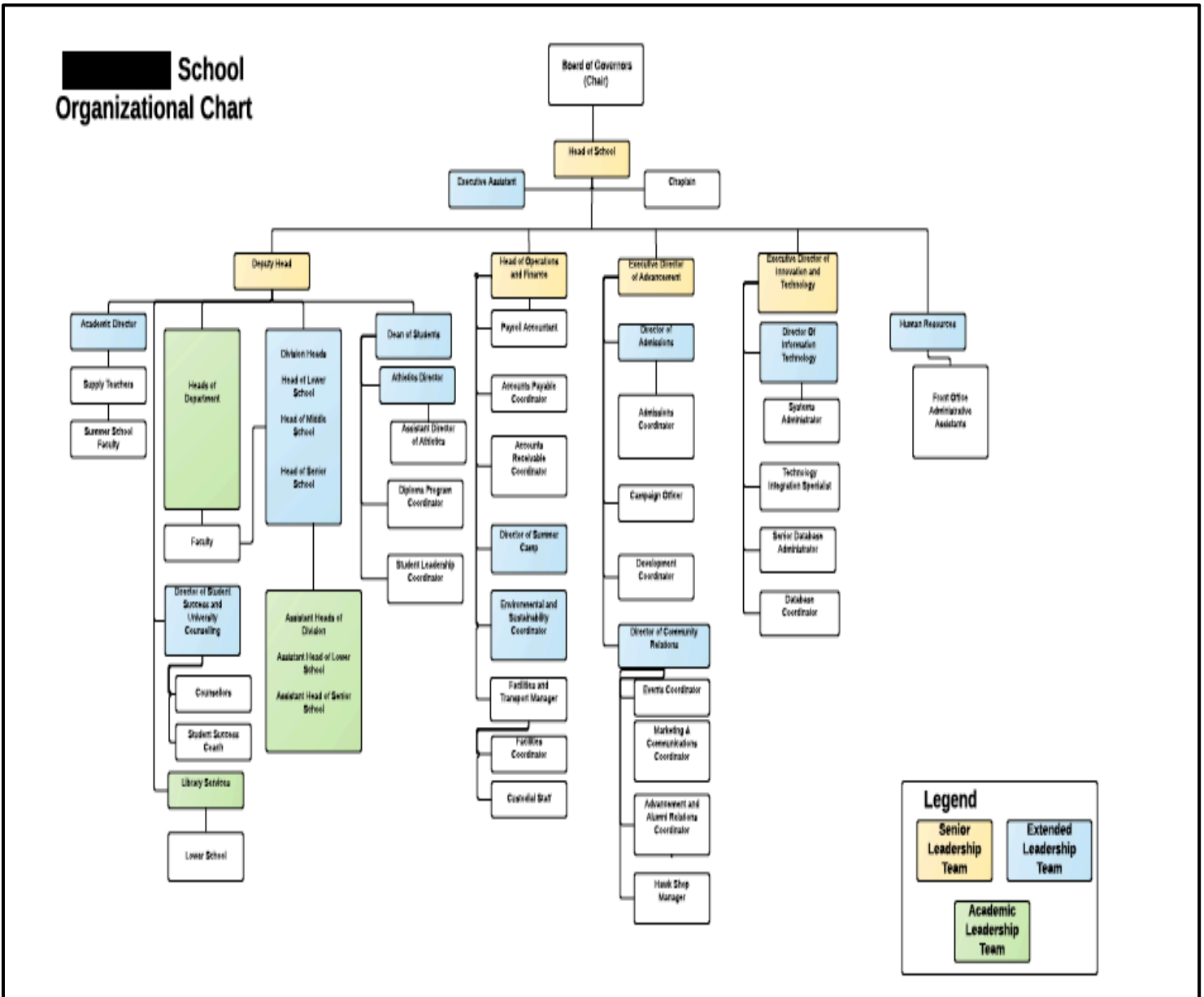
U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Technology. (2010). *Transforming American education: learning powered by technology*. Washington, D.C. Retrieved from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED512681.pdf>

Zmuda, A., Curtis, G., & Ullman, D., (2015) *Learning personalized, the evolution of the contemporary classroom*. CA, Jossey Bass.



### Appendix A

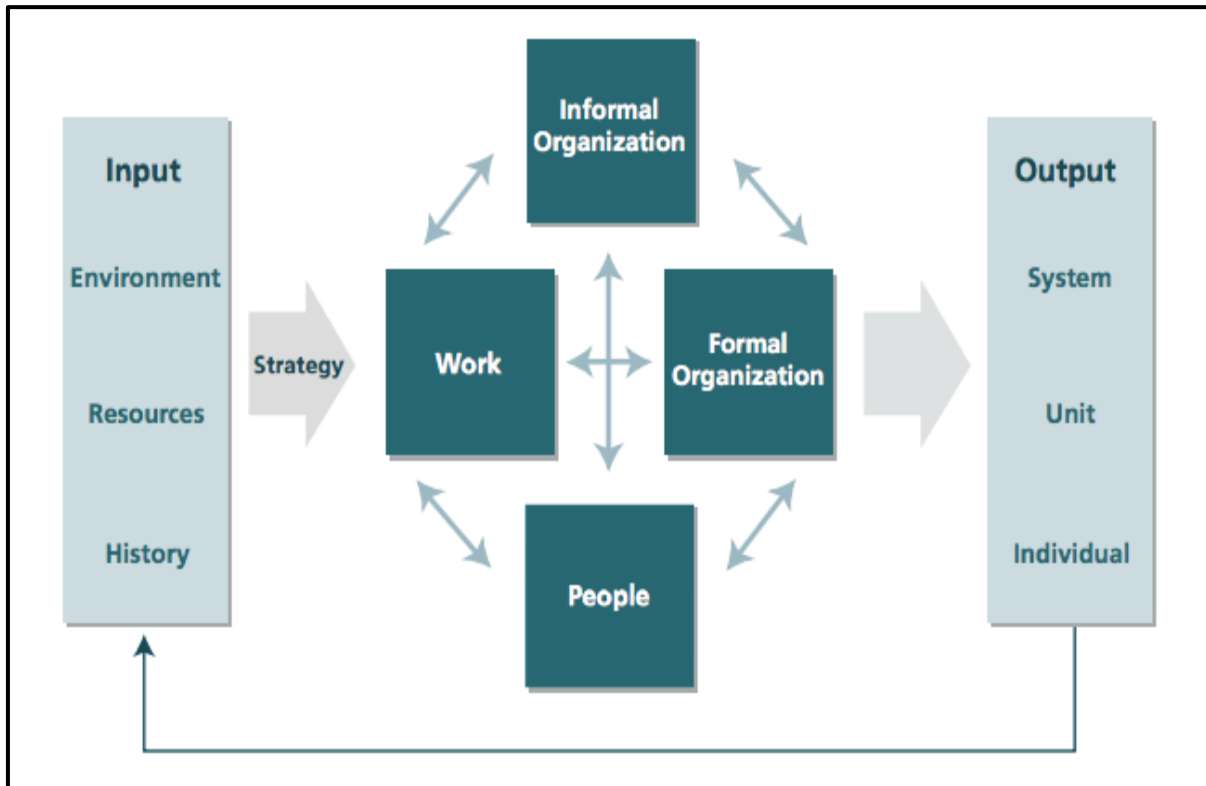
### ICS School Organizational Chart



Appendix A: ICS Organizational Chart. From “ICS Internal Document,” by Head of ICS, 2018. Reprinted with permission by Head of ICS.

**Appendix B**

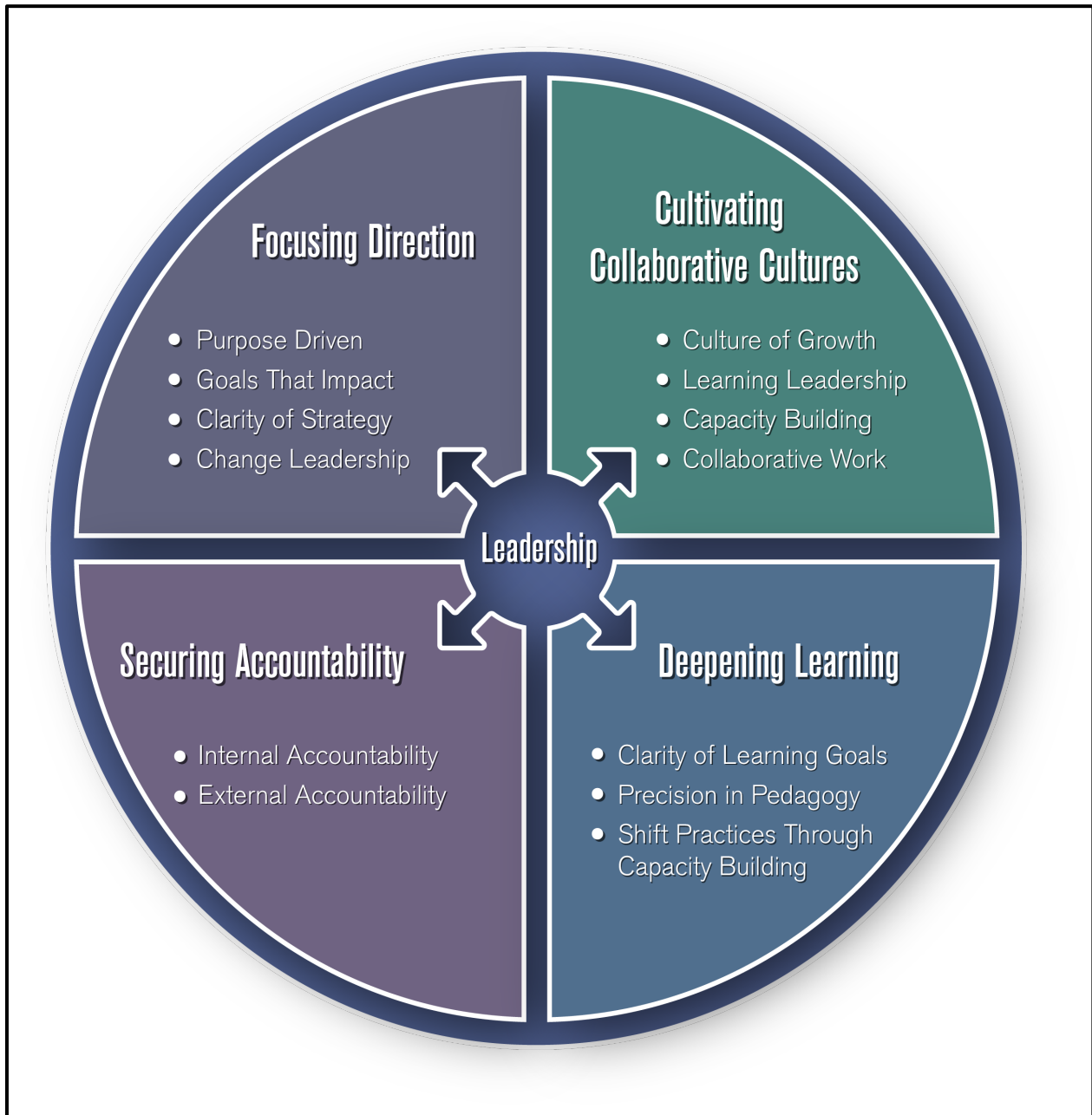
**Congruence Model**



Appendix B: Schematic of the Congruence Model. From “*Organizational change – An action-oriented toolkit* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.), by T. F. Cawsey, G. Deszca, & C. Ingols, 2016, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. Copyright 2016 by Sage Publications.

Appendix C

Coherence Framework



Appendix C: Schematic of the Coherence Framework. From “*Coherence: The Right Drivers in Action for Schools*,” by M. Fullan, and J. Quinn, 2016, CA: Corwin Press. Copyright 2016 Corwin Press Inc. Retrieved from: <https://michaelfullan.ca/coherence-the-right-drivers-in-action-for-schools-districts-and-systems/>

## **Appendix D**

### **ICS Current Academic and Post-secondary Support Process**

#### **Support for students.**

- Guiding, supporting, encouraging, questioning of various plans and options
- Meet at least 3 times each year with each student from Grades 9 through 12
- Share common information in larger grade / group meetings
- Make students aware of tools needed for successful research process
- Communicate university/college/GAP year information through various ways
- Assist with Course Selection each year toward post-secondary options
- Track and monitor the provincial ministry prerequisites for successful graduation
- Social/Emotional Counselling
- Review of study habits / work habits / goals
- Provide and expect completion of a post-secondary summary in May of their Grade 11 year.

#### **Expectations of the student.**

- Discuss academic and post-secondary goals with parents and counsellor/advisor /teachers that may include university, college or GAP year.
- Research and become familiar with programs and post-secondary institutions
- Ask questions
- Focus on school - striving for their best in all areas
- Monitor the provincial ministry requirements for successful graduation
- Plan a secondary school course of study that is demanding, realistic, and flexible
- Submit course selection each year
- Make certain that university / college program prerequisites are filled
- Submit a post-secondary summary in May
- Development of a Plan A and Plan B for post-secondary
- Speak to ICS Alumni as a resource

#### **Expectations for parents.**

- Discuss / review future goals - Plan A / Plan B
- Encourage submission of post-secondary summary in May
- Support and encourage community involvement
- Monitor your child's well-being
- Offer space - allow for some distance
- Encourage accountability, engagement and growth mind set
- Role model problem solving and resilience
- Schedule meeting with child's Student Success Counsellor
- Talk about transition
- Be mindful of our "personal dreams" as parents
- Targeted assistance with post-secondary research

## Appendix E

### Coherence Assessment Tool

Component	Evidence
<b>Fostering Direction</b>	Shared purpose drives action.
	A small number of goals tied to student learning drive decisions.
	A clear strategy for achieving the goals is known by all.
	Change knowledge is used to move the school/district/system forward.
<b>Creating Collaborative Cultures</b>	A growth mind-set underlies the culture.
	Leaders model learning themselves and shape a culture of learning.
	Collective capacity building is fostered above individual development.
	Structures and processes support intentional collaborative work.
<b>Deepening Learning</b>	Learning goals are clear to everyone and drive instruction.
	A set of effective pedagogical practices is known and used by all educators.
	Robust processes (collaborative inquiry and examining student work) are used regularly to improve practice.
<b>Securing Accountability</b>	Capacity building is used to continuously improve results.
	Underperformance is an opportunity for growth, not blame.
	External accountability is used transparently to benchmark progress.

Appendix E: Coherence Assessment Tool. From “*Coherence: The Right Drivers in Action for Schools*,” by M. Fullan, and J. Quinn, 2016, CA: Corwin Press. Retrieved from [https://us.corwin.com/sites/default/files/upm-binaries/70791\\_Fullan\\_Coherence\\_Coherence\\_Assessment\\_Tool.pdf](https://us.corwin.com/sites/default/files/upm-binaries/70791_Fullan_Coherence_Coherence_Assessment_Tool.pdf). Copyright 2016 Corwin Press Inc.

## Appendix F

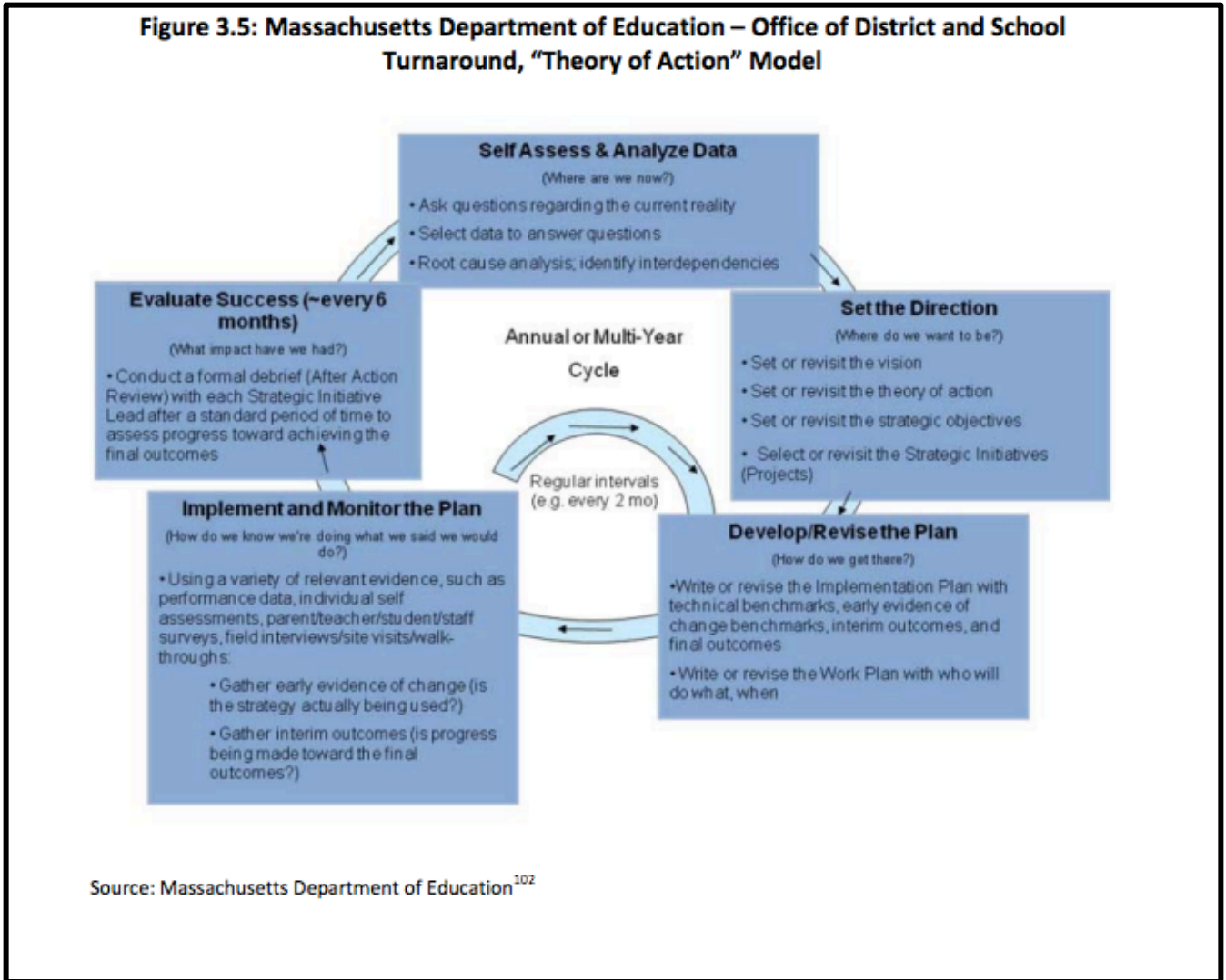
### Ontario Focused Intervention Partnership



Appendix F: PDSA Schematic developed by the Ontario Focused Intervention Partnership. From “*Capacity building K–12 every student/every school: Ontario focused intervention partnership for elementary schools,*” by Ontario Ministry of Education, 2016, February. Special Edition # 44, p.3. Toronto. Public domain.

Appendix G

Massachusetts Department of Education – Office of District and School Turnaround,  
 “Theory of Action” Model



Appendix G: PDSA Schematic depicting the Theory of Action Model. From “*Best Practices for School Improvement Planning*,” Hanover Research, 2014. Retrieved from <https://www.hanoverresearch.com/media/Best-Practices-for-School-Improvement-Planning.pdf>. Public domain.