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Promoting Student Action in a Primary School

Kyle Hawkins
khawki2@uwo.ca

WESTERN UNIVERSITY

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by

Kyle Hawkins

AN ORGANIZATIONAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

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Abstract

This organizational improvement plan addresses a problem of practice in the primary division of an international school. This improvement plan focuses on increasing the quantity and quality of student action as an outcome of learning as evidenced in the school's curriculum mapping database. Proposed changes are based on the belief that the overarching purpose of schooling is to prepare individuals for full engagement and participation in democratic society. Full participation requires that students develop a sense of agency and empowerment to act upon the knowledge they gain through their schooling. Schooling provides students with the ability and disposition to challenge the status quo and think critically about issues of fairness, justice, and equity to create a more just society. This plan uses social justice as a lens through which to view the process of change, with a blend of transformative leadership and distributed leadership to guide the planning and implementation of this change plan. Kotter's (1996) Stage Model of change provides a framework upon which this organizational improvement plan is structured and guided.

Keywords: Critical Theory, Transformative Leadership, Distributed Leadership, Kotter, Stage Model of Change

Executive Summary

This organizational improvement plan (OIP) responds to feedback that emerged from a school evaluation by external accrediting bodies. This feedback included the recommendation that practices be developed within the primary division of the school to more effectively support student action. As an IB World School, TIS is obligated to take action based on the recommendations of the IB related to developing international mindedness, developing a shared understanding of action, and finding ways to further support children in developing attitudes and skills to promote action. The school is expected to make progress in developing student attitudes and skills to allow for student action before the next evaluation visit, which will take place during the 2020-2021 school year.

Chapter 1 of this organizational improvement plan introduces the problem of practice in further detail and presents the context of the organization as a well-established, not-for-profit school governed by a board of trustees situated in western Europe. This initial chapter also establishes my role as an assistant principal within the primary division of this school, and presents a blend of transformative leadership and distributed leadership that guides my work in planning and implementing this OIP. The problem of practice and potential solutions are viewed throughout this OIP through a social justice lens. This is a lens that acknowledges the importance of fair and equitable treatment of all people in society and aligns closely with the chosen leadership approaches of distributed and transformative leadership.

The second chapter of this OIP presents distributed leadership as currently embedded into the structures and practices of the organization and examines the fidelity with which it is implemented. Key to effective implementation of this OIP is to embed transformative and distributed approaches to leadership throughout the planning and implementation of the plan.

Doing so consistently is essential to achieving the desired outcomes of the plan. Kotter's eight-

stage model is used as a framework for planning and leading the change process because of the

balance of structure and flexibility the framework provides.

The solution chosen as the focus of this OIP is to develop and implement a new model of

curriculum and pedagogy to support, encourage, facilitate, and celebrate student action. This

model would sit within the framework of the IB's Primary Years Programme. To remain

consistent with the ethics of distributed leadership, the specifics of such a model need to be

developed collaboratively with staff. An example model is presented that may be used as a

starting point to frame discussions and to incorporate feedback from a variety of stakeholders

within the school community. This example contains four central elements. The first of these

elements is the five categories of action the IB has presented (IBO, 2017). The second element is

Hart's Ladder of Participation (Hart, 1992) used as a tool to test the level of student participation.

The third element is an iterative cycle of reflection and feedback based loosely on the model

provided by the IB (IBO, 2009). The fourth and final element is approaches to pedagogy,

including a focus on significant and meaningful content, the incorporation of critical pedagogy,

and a focus on global citizenship skills and dispositions. The proposed solution relies on the

professional capital and collective expertise of the teaching staff, and works to connect people

with purpose. This approach to addressing the problem of practice directly impacts the

experiences that children have in the classroom and in the broader school community in order to

create the conditions in which children are more likely to engage in taking meaningful action.

The third and final chapter of this organizational improvement plan uses SMART goal-

setting (Doran, 1981) to clearly articulate how the desired outcome is specific, measurable,

attainable, realistic, and time-bound. Three main objectives are identified as part of this goal-

setting. The first initiative is to develop approaches to teaching and learning that are informed by

critical pedagogy. The second initiative is to support and develop a shared understanding of a

broader definition of 'action', which incorporates the IB's five categories of action: participation,

advocacy, social justice, social entrepreneurship, and lifestyle choices (International

Baccalaureate, 2017). The third initiative is to implement systems to model, identify, and

celebrate instances of individual and collective action on both a classroom level and division

level. Celebrating action regularly, in an explicit manner, communicates to all stakeholders what

is valued within the organization (Bolman & Deal, 2017).

Successfully achieving the goals identified will lead to three anticipated outcomes. These

outcomes include the following:

- The school's curriculum mapping database will show an increased quantity in
  reported instances of student action.

- A review of the quality of these examples of action using an adapted version of
  Hart's Ladder of Participation (1992) will provide evidence of greater student
  participation in these instances of action.

- The IB evaluation report, following their visit in winter 2020-21, will identify that
  significant progress has been made in regard to student action since their last visit,
  and therefore, will not make a recommendation that the school requires further
  work in this area.

The final section of this OIP presents a plan to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the

plan iteratively throughout the implementation process using a plan-do-study-act model

(Christoff, 2018). This model allows for ongoing evaluation of the efficacy of the implemented

changes and supports revising plans based on ongoing feedback and reflection. The chapter

concludes by presenting a plan for communicating the need for change, and for communicating with stakeholders throughout the change process.

This organizational improvement plan is aimed at implementing changes in a single school, in a single context. While this may be seen by some as a relatively narrow focus, it may be argued that all transformation towards a more just and equitable future must start somewhere. Where better to begin than with encouraging the youngest members of society to become active and involved members of their community by supporting them to build the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to take meaningful action to make the world a better place?

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Glossary of Terms

Action:

Action refers to intentional decisions made by children, in response to their learning, to take individual or collective action to make a positive difference, and is seen as a medium through which to actualize the International Baccalaureate's mission to 'make the world a better place' (International Baccalaureate, 2014)

International Baccalaureate (IB):

The International Baccalaureate is an organization that offers four international educational programmes, as well as a range of educational services to schools, including professional development and school evaluation.

Primary:

While in North America the term 'elementary' is typically used, the International Baccalaureate follows the British convention of using the term 'primary' to refer to the stage of schooling prior to the middle-years (junior high). In the context of this, OIP primary refers to the grades of schooling catering to children ages 3-11.

Primary Years Programme (PYP):

One of the four programmes offered by the International Baccalaureate. While the age of students in the PYP vary from one school to another, it typically includes children from around the ages of 3-11.

Professional Learning Community (PLC):

A group of teachers who collaborate together to address a perceived problem of challenge related to teaching and learning.

The International School (TIS):

TIS is a pseudonym for the school that is the subject of this organizational improvement plan. The school is operated as a not-for-profit organization governed by a board of trustees and funded primarily through tuition fees and corporate partnership agreements.

Chapter 1

Introduction and Problem

This organizational improvement plan focuses on responding to feedback from a school accrediting body recommending that practices be developed to more effectively support student action in the primary school. Effective teaching is responsive to the prior knowledge, experiences, needs and interests of students (International Baccalaureate, 2009). A significant indicator of the efficacy of a learning engagement is its ability to provoke a change in behavior, or a desire to transfer new understandings into actions. As the ancient Mujaddid Abu Hamid al-Ghazali suggested, knowledge without action lacks purpose, "if a man studied a hundred thousand intellectual issues and understood them, but did not act on the strength of them, they would not be of use to him except by taking action" (al-Ghazali, 2005, p. 8).

The problem of practice presented here is situated within a broader context of tensions related to the purpose of international schooling in general, and the purpose and aims of the International Baccalaureate (IB) in particular. On a school level, The International School (TIS) is obligated to take action based on the recommendations of the IB related to developing international mindedness, developing a shared understanding of action, and finding ways to further support children in developing attitudes and skills to promote action.

These obligations are related to the more altruistic aims of schooling, while the competing view of the purpose of international schooling relates to meeting the educational needs of the mobile elite and to provide a set of transferable credentials, which are recognized in various schools of higher-education around the world. This context is explored further in the next section.

Organizational Context

In ordert o adequately understand the organizational context of TIS, it is important to briefly explore the history of the school, and the current context the school finds itself situated in.

History and Context

TIS is a not-for-profit day school located in a fully developed country in western Europe. The school serves the needs of the expatriate families in the town, and surrounding areas, in which the school is located. The school began as a small tutoring group for children in the 1960s by the families who came to the local town as employees of a company that relocated its manufacturing plant to the area (Mota, 2012). The school eventually developed into a privately owned, for-profit day school. The most significant event in recent school history was the merger in 2008, which involved the purchase of three schools merging into a single entity and transitioning to not-for-profit status (Mota, 2012).

The school currently educates nearly 1300 students of more than 50 different nationalities, predominantly from Europe and North America. TIS is an English-medium, International Baccalaureate (IB) World School offering all four of the IB programmes. The four programmes are the Primary Years Programme (pre-school-grade 5), the Middle Years Programme (grades 6-10), the Diploma Programme (grades 11-12), and the Career-Related Programme (also grades 11-12). The school was an early adopter of the IB's Primary Years Programme, which it continues to offer today. This organizational improvement plan will focus specifically on the primary division of TIS, which includes children between the ages of three and eleven. While the term 'elementary' is typically used in North America when referring to this stage of schooling, this OIP will use the term 'primary' to be consistent with the IB terminology.

International schools like TIS may link their origins to the establishment of the International School of Geneva in 1924, which was established to cater to the needs of the families working for the International Labour Office and the League of Nations (Hayden & Thompson, 2008). It is important to note the timing of the establishment of the International School of Geneva, as it coincided with the period between the two largest global conflicts the world has ever experienced. Marie-Thérèse Maurette, who served as director from 1929 to 1949, was highly influential in establishing the philosophy of pedagogy at this school (The International School of Geneva, 2016). Maurette outlined her philosophy in an UNESCO paper in 1948 titled, Educational Techniques for Peace; Do They Exist? Maurette's essay outlines several tenets that later became integral to all IB programmes. These include international-mindedness, multi-lingualism, and civic action. It is no coincidence that the IB traces its roots to a group of teachers from the International School of Geneva in the 1960s (International Baccalaureate Organization, 2017). Maurette succinctly establishes the altruistic intentions of her philosophy:

> We must have an education that awakens the consciousness of the brotherhood of man - not only in the domains of thought and feeling, but also in those of action. Habits of mutual aid and concerted action must be set up. (Maurette, 1948, p. 16)

In more recent times, TIS, like many international schools, has felt tension between two competing aims of international schooling (Tarc, 2009; Wylie, 2011; Marshall 2011; Tate, 2016). These competing aims can be described generally as the 'pragmatic' versus the 'altruistic'. The pragmatic aim relates to meeting the educational needs of the mobile elite, or as Cambridge (2011) writes, "The globalist approach to international education is influenced by and contributes to the global diffusion of the values of free market economics, expressed in terms of

an ideology of meritocratic competition combined with positional competition" (p. 131). IB schools like TIS may appeal to those families who seek positional advantage in this increasingly globalized world. This aim coexists in tension with the more idealistic aim related to developing intercultural understanding and respect in order to positively impact the world and promote peaceful relations within and across cultural and national boundaries. This tension will likely continue to influence TIS as the school works through future iterations of its strategic vision and reviews its mission and vision.

Authorization & Evaluation

Schools offering IB programmes must pass an authorization process, then engage in an evaluation process approximately once every five years (International Baccalaureate, 2010) in order to maintain accreditation. TIS engaged in an in-depth self-study in the spring of 2014 involving all stakeholders. Following this study, the IB sent a visiting team to conduct an evaluation. A few months following the visit, the IB delivered an evaluation report, which included recommendations relating to several elements of the programme. Most significant to this OIP is the recommendation that, "The school further adapts learning experiences to develop student attitudes and skills that allow for meaningful student action" (International Baccalaureate, 2015, p. 15).

This element of the programme was identified as an area for growth both internally, through the self-study process, and externally via the evaluation report provided by the IB. The school is expected to make progress in developing student attitudes and skills to allow for student action to take place before the next evaluation visit, which will take place during the 2020-2021 school year.

Mission & Vision

The International School's mission is in alignment with the mission of the IB, which states, "The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect" (International Baccalaureate, 2009, p. v). TIS describes its ethos and culture as being guided by care and respect where international mindedness is pursued and the differences of individuals are celebrated. The community is motivated to reach out to engage with their own and other communities ("Mission and Values – The International School," n.d.). While expectations regarding action and community service are present in the curriculum from early years through grade 12 at TIS, specific references to this element of the programme are notably absent from the literature the school presents on its mission, vision, and school ethos and culture. In her analysis of the promotional materials of 40 IB schools in Australia, Whitehead (2005) found a complete absence of emphasis on humanitarianism and social justice. The schools instead emphasize international mobility and social advantage. It could be argued that TIS's promotional materials have a similar slant, but it is not clear if this is done intentionally or unintentionally.

At a leadership retreat in August of 2017 this absence of reference to the IB's social justice orientation in TIS's mission and vision was discussed. It was decided at that time that the school's vision and mission would be reviewed during the 2018-2019 school year with the intention of rectifying this disparity (The International School, 2017). While it may be premature to assume the outcome of the review will lead to a better alignment between the school's mission and the mission of the IB to "create a better and more peaceful world" ("Mission," n.d.), it is this author's opinion that this is a highly likely outcome. Such a development presents itself as a provocation to move forward initiatives aimed at addressing the IB's recommendation that TIS

"further adapt learning experiences to develop student attitudes and skills that allow for meaningful student action" (International Baccalaureate, 2015, p. 15).

Leadership & Governance

TIS is governed by a board of trustees that oversee strategic planning and the financial welfare of the school. The director of the school serves as an ex officio member of the board. The leadership team is responsible for the daily operation of the school. This team includes directors of curriculum, educational technology, institutional advancement, and finance, as well as the principals of each division of the school. Assistant principals are considered part of the extended leadership team and are welcome to join any of the leadership team's meetings, but attendance is optional, not expected. Additionally, there is an instructional leadership team that is made up of the director of curriculum, the curriculum coordinators from each division of the school, and assistant principals from each division of the school. The leadership team focuses more on operations and strategic vision, while the instructional leadership team focuses on curriculum and pedagogy.

Decision making within the school is typically collaborative in nature. There are very few significant decisions made without significant consultation and collaboration with all stakeholders who are significantly impacted by a specific change or new initiative. It is not uncommon to place decisions in the hands of the stakeholders who will be most directly impacted by the respective decision, and it is also common to seek input from students when decisions will impact them. In this sense, it may be most appropriate to describe the prevailing leadership style within the school as distributive, or shared in nature. There is also frequent talk of 'stewardship' amongst school leaders, who see their role as protecting the school for those who will inherit it in the future. There is an emphasis on sustainability, fiduciary responsibility,

and continual school improvement. This implies a servant leadership approach (Greenleaf, 1977)

where school leaders, and other stakeholders, are seen as servants to the community and to the

mission and vision of the school. The caveat here is that there appears to be a relatively diffuse

understanding of the school's vision. This issue is likely to be addressed as the vision and

mission are reviewed during the 2018-19 school year.

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Leadership Position and Lens Statement

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The next section will briefly explore the leadership structure at TIS and my individual

role within this structure.

Leadership Position

I currently serve the school in the role of assistant principal in the primary division of

TIS. There are approximately 90 staff members in the primary division along with 550 students.

Figure 1.1 shows the organizational flow chart for TIS.
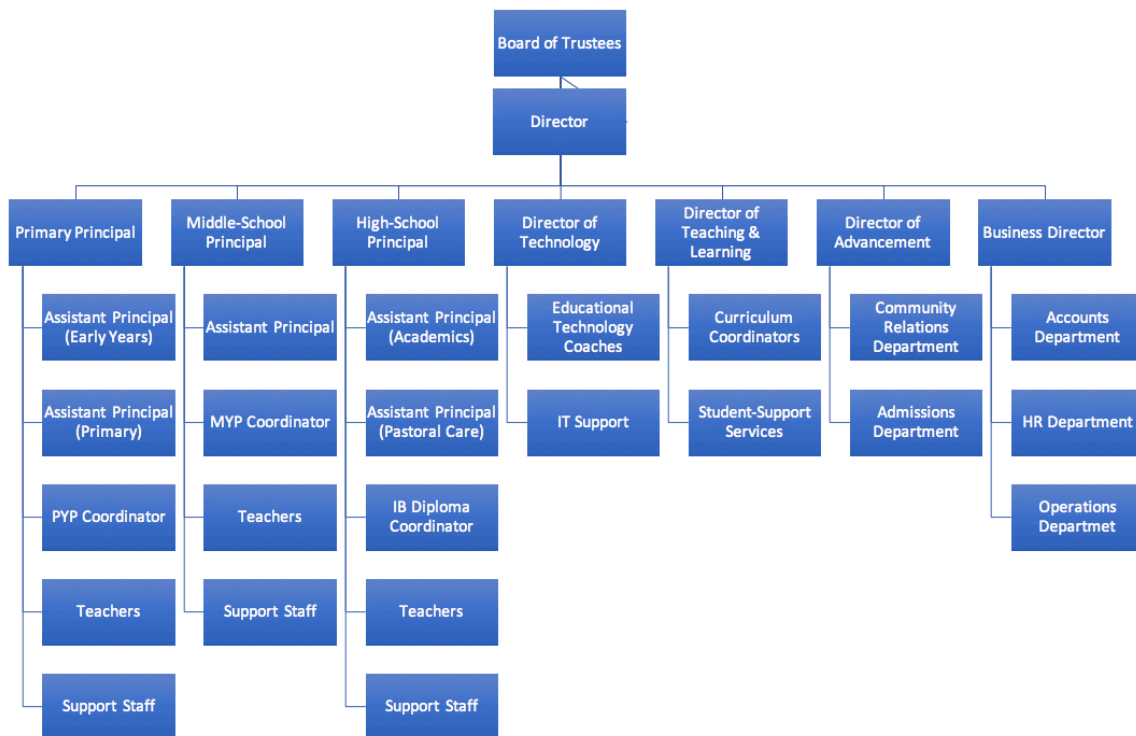
Figure 1.1 TIS Organizational Flow Chart.

        The job description for my role situates the assistant principal as a pedagogical leader

within the school. This role requires working collaboratively with other members of the

instructional leadership team, curriculum team, department heads, and grade-level team leaders

to identify areas for pedagogical improvement and to plan and implement interventions to

address such areas of need. Table 1.1 articulates the involvement of the assistant principal in the

various teams formed to lead the school. The assistant principal works closely with the director

of teaching and learning and the primary division curriculum coordinator on all matters related to

teaching and learning. Addressing the problem of practice described below sits well within the

agency of the assistant principal in regard to formal position and responsibility.

Table 1. 1

Composition of leadership teams at TIS

Senior Leadership Team	Extended Leadership Team	Instructional Leadership Team	Curriculum Leadership Team
Director	Senior Leadership Team	Director of Teaching & Learning	Director of Teaching & Learning
Divisional Principals (3)	Assistant Principals (5)	Divisional Principals (3)	Assistant Principals (5)
Director of Technology		Assistant Principals (5)	Curriculum Coordinators (3)
Director of Teaching & Learning		Curriculum Coordinators (3)	
Director of Advancement			
Business Director			

*Assistant Principals may attend SLT meetings at their own discretion			

Leadership Approach

The approach to leadership that aligns most closely with this problem of practice is a blend of transformative leadership and distributed leadership. Shields (2010) describes transformative leadership as beginning with "questions of justice and democracy; it critiques inequitable practice and offers the promise not only of greater individual achievement but of a better life lived in common with others" (p. 559). Clearly, Shields' construct of transformative leadership is aligned to the more egalitarian elements of the missions of both TIS and the IB related to making the world a better place. Shields also points out that the key values of transformative leadership include: liberation, democracy, equity, and justice, and that the goal of transformative leadership is "individual, organizational, and societal transformation" (p. 563). Societal transformation speaks directly to the focus of this problem of practice, which focuses on supporting children to take action that will make a positive impact on themselves or others.

Woods et al. (2004), in their systematic review of literature, identified three distinct elements of distributed leadership. The first element they identified is that distributed leadership emerges from a network, or group, of interacting individuals. The second element relates to the

openness of leadership boundaries, whereas the set of individuals acting as leaders may span a wide range of actors in any given context. The third element is the view that expertise is distributed across many stakeholders within an organization. Expertise is not the sole perview of those in formal positions of power, but is found throughout the organization. This implies that, depending on the context, it is most effective to draw on different stakeholders, with different areas of expertise, to exercise formal and informal leadership within the organization. Woods and Gronn (2009) make the case that there is democratic potential in distributed leadership as they point out that distributed leadership is a concertive action "where the combined leadership of many individuals in the grouping or organization is greater than the sum of the parts" (p. 447). Woods and Gronn also point out how distributed leadership presents the possibility of including, or overlapping with, the democratic elements of self-governance, protection from arbitrary power, and legitimacy grounded in consent (p. 447).

Transformative and distributed leadership complement one another as these two approaches to leadership are both focused on a more equitable and democratic way of leading. Distributed leadership provides a more concrete and practical framework for the implementation of practice, while the egalitarian ideals of transformative leadership provide the aspirational direction for change.

Distributed leadership is widely regarded by leaders at TIS as the prevailing leadership style and approach within the school. Collaboration and shared decision making has guided most of the change processes at TIS over the past several years. While there is broad alignment to the ideology of distributed decision making, it is implemented inconsistently from one leader to another as the comfort level with distributing control and influence to others varies by individual leader.

As a leader at TIS, I view distributed leadership as providing guidance towards the operationalization of the ideology of transformative leadership. Transformative leadership theory provides a leader with the rationale for change; challenging the status quo to reduce hegemonic influence and marginalization of groups of stakeholders within the organization. Ideas associated with distributed leadership provide a leader with guidance of how to work towards this change. For example, the actions of a leader who wants to challenge the status quo through transformation could find it useful to draw on the broad set of experiences and expertise that lies throughout the network of stakeholders within the organization. Transformative leadership provides an orientation towards critiquing the status quo to address issues of justice and equity, while distributed leadership provides a framework for building organizational commitment and shared purpose.

Addressing this problem of practice will require me to stay focused on a future state that requires transformative change within the organization. In the process of working towards this desired future state, I will draw implement practices that are consistent with distributed leadership. Such approaches will include establishing and facilitating groups of stakeholders to come together to work collaboratively to decide on the direction and implementation of changes, and drawing on the expertise of a range of both formal and informal leaders within the primary division.

Theoretical Framework/Lens

In the broadest sense, I view this problem of practice, and potential solutions, through the lens of social justice, which can generally be defined as "fair and equitable distribution of power, resources, and obligations in society to all people, regardless of race or ethnicity, age, gender, ability, status, sexual orientation and religious or spiritual background" (Hage et al., 2011, p.

2795). Under this umbrella of social justice, this problem of practice is further informed by

critical theory, as well as Gramsci's theory of cultural hegemony (Gramsci, Buttigieg, & Callari,

1992) and Freire's concepts of critical consciousness and praxis (Freire, 2000).

Jessop (2014) provides the defining features of critical theory when she writes, "Critical

theory aims to achieve the emancipation and transformation of individuals and society through

human action." She later adds, "The political significance of the action of educating is brought to

the fore, and education takes a central place as a means of promoting individual autonomy and

addressing issues of prejudice and authoritarianism" (p. 194). Within this definition is a

suggestion of the coupling of knowledge and action similar to Freire's theory of 'Praxis', which

will be explored further below. Critical theory, as the name suggests, orients itself towards

critiquing society. This critique is aimed at better understanding the complex underlying power

structures that determine how the world works (Crossman, 2018).

Critical theory aligns with and informs the more ideological and altruistic aims of

international education, which can be identified through a review of the history of the

International Baccalaureate (Tarc, 2009), by reviewing the educational principles of early

thinkers in international education such as Marie-Therese Maurette (1948), or by reading through

the mission and vision of organizations such as United World College (What is UWC?, n.d.) or

Fieldwork Education (About the IPC, n.d.). These sources all indicate a focus on creating a better

and more peaceful world through the development of intercultural understanding and respect.

Implied here as well is the need to take action in order to bring about such change. This action

element links directly to this OIP's problem of practice.

It is worth considering here the proposition that the current era of globalization, and the

international school movement that followed it began in the era immediately following two

world wars, and was informed by the tragedy and destruction of these global conflicts. The aim of developing intercultural understanding and making a positive impact on the world continues to be a focus, at least in an ideological sense, of most international schools and their accrediting bodies. In parallel to this, modern critical theory has its roots in Marxist philosophy (Bohman, 2016) and developed along a similar timeline to the international school movement. The genesis of critical theory is often associated with the German philosophers connected to the Frankfurt School, which was established in the years between the two world wars (Corradetti, n.d.) and may also be viewed as a response to the conflicts and social changes taking place in the first half of the last century.

Two concepts proposed by Paulo Freire serve as appropriate conceptual lens' through which to view this problem of practice; Praxis and Critical Consciousness. Freire describes the concept of Praxis as an iterative process of critically reflecting upon and consequently acting upon the world to transform it (Freire, 2000). Freire saw Critical Consciousness as being developed through critical, collaborative dialogue and Praxis (Glass, 2014). The Freire Institute explains "that we all acquire social myths which have a dominant tendency, and so learning is a critical process which depends upon uncovering real problems and actual needs" ("Concepts Used by Paulo Freire - Freire Institute," n.d.). Critical Consciousness then requires challenging the status quo rather than taking it as objective truth or reality (Bartlett, 2008). Praxis and Critical Consciousness provide concepts that may inform pedagogical approaches to support students in taking action.

A final conceptual lens that may be used to frame this problem of practice is Gramsci's theory of cultural hegemony. Antonio Gramsci (Gramsci, Buttigieg, & Callari, 1992) proposed the theory that the dominant ideologies of society reflect the interests of the ruling class. These

interests are perpetuated through socializing people into the norms, beliefs, and values of the dominant group via social institutions such as the media, churches, and the education system. Cultural Hegemony becomes embedded when those who are not members of the dominant group come to see their station as inevitable rather than created by conditions placed upon them by the dominant group (Cole, 2018). Zaidi et al. (2016) apply the concept of cultural hegemony to education when they define 'educational cultural hegemony' as "educational practices where teachers assume that the content and task is 'culture free' and, therefore, implicitly discourage bringing in personal cultural context" (p. 2). The concept of cultural hegemony is relevant to this problem of practice as it provides an opportunity to identify elements of society that are most in need of transformation.

If the purpose of critical theory is to transform society in order to make it fairer and just, then using praxis and critical consciousness to identify and respond to issues related to cultural hegemony provides a means through which to approach this task from a theoretical perspective. In order for students to be empowered to take action to change themselves and their society, an appropriate starting point may be to focus on understanding the underlying power structures within society and their position within this structure.

The problem of practice described below focuses on the need to support students to take socially responsible action in response to their learning. This is a requirement of the educational programme at TIS and school evaluators look for evidence of such action during the evaluation process. Within the context of the International Baccalaureate, this action should be aimed at making the world a better place. A social justice orientation is suggested directly by this element, which is present in all IB programmes. This theoretical lens supports, and is supported by, the leadership approaches described earlier, and provides guidance, not only for the desired changes

targeted by this OIP, but also guides approaches and processes that will need to be put into place to reach the desired outcomes.

Leadership Problem of Practice

The problem of practice that will be addressed is a lack of provision of learning experiences at The International School (TIS), which encourage and support students in the primary division to take action in response to their learning. This problem was identified by the International Baccalaureate Organization as part of a school evaluation process. Pedagogical leaders influence curriculum and instruction at TIS, which has a direct impact on the learning experiences provided to children. Members of the TIS pedagogical leadership team are thus positioned to address this recommendation from the IB. In this context, Action refers to intentional decisions made by children, in response to their learning, to take individual or collective action to make a positive difference, and is seen as a medium through which to actualize the International Baccalaureate's mission to 'make the world a better place' (International Baccalaureate, 2014). It is believed within the IB's Primary Years Programme (PYP) that "successful inquiry will lead to responsible action, initiated by the student as a result of the learning process" (International Baccalaureate, 2009, p. 30). Reflections on units of inquiry housed in the school's curriculum database indicate relatively few instances of action being cited, and those that are cited tend to have relatively low levels of student initiative involved. With a new self-study starting in the autumn of 2019, and the next evaluation visit by the IB scheduled for winter 2021, it is important that tangible progress toward this recommendation be evidenced. Furthermore, the lack of evidence of student action may indicate that the teaching and learning experiences of children at the school are not significant, relevant,

and meaningful enough to inspire action based on learning. What types of learning experiences might best encourage and support student action?

Successfully addressing this problem should lead to an increase in the quantity and quality of student action identified in the school's planning documents, which are housed in an online database. This database contains the collaborative reflections for each of the six units covered at each grade level throughout the primary years. Part of this reflection for each unit requires teachers to respond to the question: 'What student-initiated actions arose from the learning?'. Analysis of this section of the planners will allow for quantifying the frequency of action and measuring of change over time.

The programmes of the International Baccalaureate provide a continuum of student action that takes different forms within the different programmes. In the Diploma Programme (DP), this takes the form of a required component known as 'Creativity, Activity, Service' (CAS), while in the Middle Years Programme (MYP) this is known as 'Service as Action'. In the Primary Years Programme, it is simply referred to as 'Action'. While the MYP and DP provide significant guidance and support for implementing these components, there has been little support provided by the IB to primary years educators up to this point. The PYP has recently completed a programme review, and significant changes were announced formally in late 2018. These changes include further support and guidance for teachers and other stakeholders to support primary aged children in taking action.

Framing the Problem of Practice

In November and December of 2016, a series of staff meetings were held focusing on student action in the primary division. Staff were asked to review their units of teaching and learning across the year and identify instances where student action was effectively supported, as

well as identify any opportunities to better support student action. Since teachers are required to place their six-week units using the school curriculum database, and are also required to identify instances of student action when collaboratively reflecting on the effectiveness of their teaching and learning, a large amount of useful data is available to support such an endeavor. Following these meetings, staff were asked to provide feedback via an anonymous survey. A synthesis of this feedback showed a desire for teachers to have more guidance and support for developing their pedagogy to better support students to take action. Teachers communicated that they understood what action is and that they placed a high value upon it, but wanted more guidance in how to effectively support it through their pedagogical approaches (Hawkins, 2016).

The challenge of effectively supporting student action in PYP schools is not new, nor is it unique to TIS. About ten years ago, Simon Davidson and Steven Carber put together a collection of writings by various authors involved in international education aimed at identifying the future direction of the PYP. Davidson opted to write a chapter on action himself after stating that he searched for, but could not find, an expert in this particular area to contribute to the collection (Davidson, 2009, p. 101). Davidson argues for an expanded view of what constitutes action. He states, "Even the smallest of choices, providing it is significant to students, can be powerful in developing habits of making thoughtful choices, and carrying them out over sustained periods of time" (Davidson, 2009, p. 108). While it may not be appropriate to expect young children to develop elaborate campaigns for social justice, it may be more productive to think in terms of the habits of mind, dispositions, and the practices of acting upon a sense of fairness and justice in small ways every day, which will prepare them for a future of more direct engagement, and help develop their sense of agency to one day take more significant action to support causes and issues that they care about.

A recent release from the IB suggests that the PYP enhancements will present the concept of learner agency as tightly coupled with action. A transition guide released in June 2018 defines agency as, "The power to take meaningful and intentional action, and acknowledges the rights and responsibilities of the individual, supporting voice, choice and ownership for everyone in the learning community" (International Baccalaureate, 2018, p. 4). While the full set of enhancements are yet to be released, it appears that PYP educators can expect some changes related to action within the PYP.

Factors Shaping the Problem of Practice

There are currently four factors heavily influencing the problem of practice. These factors are as follows: potential conflict between a pedagogical focus on social justice and school funding from organizations with questionable track records in regard to exploitation; consumption of time and resources in responding to a crisis; high levels of staff retention; and school climate and culture.

Currently, TIS operates independently of any significant governmental oversight. The school is not subject to the laws and policies of the local Ministry of Education, and is free to develop and implement its own curriculum. TIS relies on tuition fees to provide the majority of its operating revenue. A small, but significant portion of revenue comes from corporate donations. Without the financial support of these local businesses, the sustainability of the school would be brought into question. Currently, the board of trustees is populated predominantly by high level executives from local non-government organizations. While parents from the school community were once in a minority on the board, they currently represent more than three quarters of the members. This arrangement helps in building partnerships with the local non-government organizations but may also be seen as creating a conflict of interest, whereas

members of the board are informed by their own children's experiences at the school, rather than from a broader perspective.

Some local businesses, employing members of the school community, have questionable track records in regards to exploitation of workers and natural resources in foreign countries. Situations such as this may become challenging to navigate as children are encouraged to think more deeply about issues of social justice and equity. Compounding this issue somewhat is the fact that some of these organizations have corporate partnership agreements with the school.

Perhaps the most significant factor impacting this problem of practice is the time and energy currently being consumed within the organization responding to a crisis that may be an existential threat if not resolved appropriately. The property and buildings that the school occupies are owned by another non-profit organization. While this organization is nominally philanthropic in its orientation, it relies on revenue from the school's leasing of the property to sustain the work it does. Complicating matters further is the fact that members of this non-profit organization are also members of the local government council from which the school requires approval for any significant structural or organizational changes. The school also requires the approval of local government for the issuance of resident work visas for any staff who are not citizens of the country.

At around the same time that negotiations for expansion of school facilities with local authorities and the landowners fell apart, the adjacent industrial property became available for purchase. The school managed to negotiate a deal to purchase the property for 17 million Swiss francs. While this purchase provided the school community with a temporary sense of optimism regarding expansion, it soon became clear that the damaged relationships with the landowners and local government would make it impossible to develop the property and achieve the needed

changes in property zoning. The school was subsequently left with very restricted cash flow, expensive mortgage loans to manage, and damaged relationships with local government and landowners. The school is currently in the process of repairing these damaged relationships and is trying to find a buyer for the property. This situation has led to a somewhat uncertain future for the school. It is possible that other school initiatives may be put aside as the community focuses on this threat. A recent email message sent around to all faculty has placed pressure on the board of trustees to reveal all details of the property transaction as well as all of the financial records of the school (C. Smith, personal communication, October 11, 2018).

Conversely, a positive opportunity exists in relation to staffing. Staff turnover is very low, averaging less than 5% over the past five years. This provides significant opportunity in terms of professional development, as shared knowledge can perpetuate and be built upon over the long term. Enrolment figures are healthy and shows little variance from year to year, allowing the school to accurately forecast revenues and expenses over the mid to long-term. It is; however, uncertain how the crisis described above may impact staff turnover in the future.

In addition to low turnover, there exists a strong sense of well-being and belonging within the school community. Exit surveys indicate that parents generally trust the school to act in the best interests of their children. New policies and curricular initiatives have generally been met with a high level of acceptance and support. This may be due, at least in part, to significant efforts to communicate such changes in a proactive manner and allow for parents to be involved in the process of collaboration or consultation when developing new policies and initiatives. For example, parent focus groups and committees have been involved in everything, from reviewing a new homework policy, to interviewing new director candidates, to providing teaching faculty with teaching resources focused on particular cultural celebrations.

While there are a set of significant challenges and opportunities relevant to this problem of practice, it does appear that it is possible to make significant progress towards increasing the quality and quantity of student action at TIS in the short to medium-term. It seems reasonable that such progress could be evidenced in time to be taken into consideration for the next IB Evaluation visit during the 2020-2021 school year.

Guiding Questions Emerging from the Problem of Practice

A number of pertinent questions come to the forefront when considering the nature and context of the problem of practice. Broad questions relating to the role of critical theory, skills to support critical consciousness and praxis, and curriculum and pedagogy to support student action will be briefly explored in the paragraphs below.

The Role of Critical Theory

What is the role of critical theory in responding to this problem of practice? Critical theory appears to have a direct connection to this problem of practice because of the emphasis it places on transforming individuals and society through action. Critical theory suggests that the act of educating is an inherently political one. What does this mean in the context of primary education? What are the initial steps towards supporting children to recognize cultural hegemony in an age-appropriate way? Is the revealing of underlying power structures an inherently disruptive or unsettling experience for children, or is it appropriate to focus on issues of fairness and equity that have a more direct impact on children and their relationships with one another? Christensen and Aldridge (2013) suggest that critical pedagogy is certainly relevant to our youngest learners. They first write, "Humanistic teachers offer democratic learning experiences characterized by exploration and inquiry within a challenging and caring environment where students have choices about curriculum, problem solving, and decision making", then go on to

add, "reflection, discussion, demonstration, and immersion, about local, community, and global social action topics, enable learners to apply what they have learned" (p. vii). Their writing seems to suggest that the pathway towards developing practices of critical pedagogy with younger learners is to offer increasing opportunities for democratic participation in the classroom and school, and to ensure that children are engaged in talking and thinking about significant issues.

Skills to Support Critical Consciousness and Praxis

How do you develop skills to support critical consciousness and praxis school wide? Critical consciousness is a deep understanding of the world including its underlying power structures and dynamics. Critical consciousness is coupled tightly to praxis as action based on understanding leads to deeper understanding, therefore increasing critical consciousness in a symbiotic relationship. It seems logical that teachers require a certain critical consciousness themselves in order to support its development in the children they teach. Should it be assumed that every teacher is capable of increasing his or her critical consciousness? Or is it more reasonable to conceptualize a teacher's role as one of co-inquirer as they deepen their own critical consciousness through supporting and facilitating inquiries alongside children? Conceptualizing teacher-student relationships in this way certainly flattens the power structure within the classroom community and reinforces a more democratically-oriented learning experience. Viewing teachers more as co-inquirers may suggest that there is less need for them to have significantly higher levels of critical consciousness, but it also suggests that teachers may need to possess a different set of skills, dispositions, and philosophical orientations to effectively serve in such a role. Is it possible to support the professional growth of individuals to develop such skills, dispositions, and orientations?

Curriculum & Pedagogy to Support Student Action

What might curriculum and pedagogy to support student action look like? Effectively supporting and developing critical consciousness across a school community may require a shift in pedagogical approach and have significant implications for curriculum development. The PYP provides a framework for curriculum and pedagogy, but schools have the autonomy to develop their own curriculum within this framework. Curriculum that focuses on the development of agency, dispositions of critical thinking and analysis, and engagement with content that is relevant and significant to learners could be an important first step towards increasing critical consciousness and action. Pedagogical approaches may need to be developed over time to more effectively support curriculum of this nature. Such pedagogy may be aimed at providing opportunities for greater democratic participation in classrooms and throughout the school, as well as providing children with more choice and ownership of their learning.

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Leadership-Focused Vision for Change

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In order to explore a leadership-focused vision for change, it is useful to begin with a description of the gap between the current state and the desired future state.

Gap Between Present and Future State

A simplistic approach to this problem of practice might focus on simply modeling and celebrating student action so that children are encouraged to take action in tokenistic ways as they see their action as valued and rewarded both explicitly and implicitly by their teachers. This OIP takes a different approach by aiming for a shift in culture throughout the school. This shift involves significant change in how teachers view their role in the teaching and learning process, and how children are expected to engage in their learning. This is a potentially disruptive process

as it challenges the status quo and asks all members of the learning community to reexamine

assumptions and challenge the status quo.

Critical thinking is already valued at TIS, as it is in most schools. The PYP framework

was developed with ideas of social action, democratic participation, and empowerment in mind.

Teachers at TIS are open-minded and do value the voices of their students. The required change

should not be seen as a shift from a 'traditional' model of schooling to a very progressive one,

but a shift from a liberal-progressive state to a more critical state. The change should be seen as

more incremental than wholesale.

The desired future state is one where asking questions to better understand issues of

power and control is the status quo. This future state presents a community of students, parents,

and teachers that ask probing questions and think deeply together about why things are the way

they are, and why they aren't different. In some cases, this leads to individuals taking action to

change the way things are because they have uncovered inequity, or injustice through their

inquiry.

Priorities for Change

Of paramount importance is teachers thinking critically and collaboratively about their

own assumptions and the types of messages they are sending to their students about what is

valued and what is not valued. In addition to raising the critical consciousness of teachers, a shift

in pedagogy is also needed. McLaren (2016) outlines this need:

> We must strive to develop a pedagogy equipped to provide both intellectual and moral
>
> resistance to oppression, one that extends the concept of pedagogy beyond the mere
>
> transmission of knowledge and skills and the concept of morality beyond interpersonal
>
> relations. (p. 48)

While resisting oppression may seem to reside outside of the agency of very young learners, we have a responsibility as educators to instill in our students the dispositions and habits of mind to critically examine the assumptions with which they come into contact.

Change Drivers

The most significant driver of change is the evaluation report provided to the school by the International Baccalaureate (International Baccalaureate, 2015). This report was provided to the school following an in-depth self-study undertaken by the school and visit by a team of school evaluators. The report provided a series of recommendations that the school use to inform their strategic planning and included a specific recommendation regarding the development of learning experiences to support student action. This recommendation has been included as an action point in the school's strategic plan, which was shared openly with the school community via the school website and via email.

The school is due for another evaluation visit during the 2020-2021 school year. In preparation for this visit, the school is required to undertake a self-study process where all members of the school community are involved in collaborative reflection on the school's level of success in relation to the International Baccalaureate's Programme Standards and Practices (International Baccalaureate, 2014). This self-study will include a focus on three programme requirements relevant to this PoP. The requirements are: that the school promote responsible action within and beyond the school community; that the written curriculum allow for student action; that teaching and learning develops student attitudes and skills that allow for student action. The knowledge throughout the school community of this upcoming self-study and evaluation visit will necessitate that tangible progress be made in regard to this PoP within the next two years.

The upcoming PYP enhancements include a new definition of action, which they state "is considered as a dynamic outcome of agency, and an integral part of the learning process that can arise at any time, within or outside the programme of inquiry" (International Baccalaureate, 2018, p. 5). This recently released document also suggests that action can fall into one of five categories: participation, advocacy, social justice, social entrepreneurship, and life choices (International Baccalaureate, 2018, p. 5). While alignment with the enhancements does not need to occur in time for our next evaluation, schools are being encouraged to start transitioning to these enhancements from January 2019 onwards. The deadline for transition to be complete has not yet been set, but new professional development workshops are scheduled to begin from the spring of 2019, with a new set of standards and practices to be used for the purpose of school authorization and evaluation to be released in 2020. (International Baccalaureate, 2018). While the finer details of these changes are not yet clear, early indications are that there will be greater support for schools in developing student agency and promoting student action. With evaluation standards and professional development opportunities from the IB aligned in this direction, it seems likely that these changes will serve as drivers of change within TIS.

Other drivers of change may stem from active interventions for the purpose of school improvement. John Hattie (2015) states that the greatest impact on student progress is having inspired, knowledgeable and passionate teachers and school leaders collaborate together to maximize the effect of teaching on all children (p. 2). Beginning in the spring of 2017, the school has developed a new professional development model that focuses around professional learning communities (PLCs). The structures set up to support these PLCs provide an avenue for teachers to collaboratively develop expertise for encouraging and supporting student action. Hattie also suggests that it is important to know the impact that teaching is having on students' progression .

This focus on measuring impact is built into the current PLC structure at TIS. So, this also provides an avenue for staff to work together to develop tools to evaluate the frequency, quantity, and quality of student action. At the moment, the structure places an emphasis on teachers having personal choice regarding their area of PLC focus. The question here is how to encourage teachers to use the PLC structure to support inquiry into supporting student action. A description of how I will leverage the opportunities provided by the PLC structure as a leader will be described in Chapter 3.

Organizational Change Readiness

When leading a change initiative, it is important to consider the state of readiness that exists within the organization. The next section will explore both the organizational, and individual readiness for change at TIS.

Organizational & Individual Change Readiness

Cawsey, Deszca, and Ingols (2016) state that organizational change readiness is determined by, among other things, the previous change experiences of its members. TIS has undergone a number of significant changes over the past decade. The merger of the school in 2008, and rapid expansion in the years following, led to many changes related to bringing consistency and coherence across the curriculum. Many new policies and procedures had to be developed as the school more than doubled enrollment. In the past few years, the school had to engage in two significant changes. The first related to heightened concerns around child safeguarding in international schools following a high-profile incident involving a teacher at Southbank International School in the United Kingdom (Davies, 2014), and another incident at Jakarta Intercultural School (Hawley & Smith, 2016). TIS soon started a process of developing child-protection and safeguarding policies and procedures to ensure the safety of our students

and staff. In the past 18 months, TIS also had to deal with significant changes in how it handles and processes data as a result of the new General Data Protection Regulation for the European Union (Kurzer, 2018).

These two most recent change experiences were generally recognized as necessary and appropriate. While staff occasionally begrudged the additional time and energy involved in implementing these changes, they were generally accepted without question. Contributing to this relatively positive experience with change was the transparency and involvement of a number of key stakeholders in leading the change. Both experiences involved groups of faculty serving voluntarily and being given a high level of autonomy to enact the necessary changes. Recent positive experiences with change have helped to prepare the organization for future changes. Open communication, involvement of staff, and support by a range of stakeholders, including members of the leadership team are key components that supported previous changes and also informs this OIP.

These recent experiences suggest that individual readiness for change may be at an adequate level as these changes have not been received as particularly negative. Since this OIP addresses an issue that has a direct impact on teaching and learning, it is reasonable to assume that teachers will feel a higher level of engagement in the change process, particularly if this benefit is communicated alongside a review of the requirements established during the last evaluation visit and in the context of the next evaluation visit coming up.

Dimensions of Change Readiness

Judge and Douglas (2009) developed a list of eight dimensions of organizational change capacity based on a broad review of literature. They found that the following dimensions were associated with the capacity for change: Trustworthy Leadership; Trusting Followers, Capable

Champions; Involved Middle-Management; Innovative Culture; Accountable Culture; Effective

Communication; and Systems Thinking (Judge and Douglas, 2009, p. 638). A school culture

survey conducted in May 2018 (TIS), showed relatively positive results across all criteria related

to school culture, with items related to 'Collaborative Leadership' averaging 3.8 on a 5-point

scale. 'Collegial Support' and 'Learning Partnerships' each scored 4.3. Results indicate a

relatively high level of trust in leadership, and show that faculty view school leaders as valuing

their opinions and ideas. While school structures currently support a high level of involvement in

decision making by middle management, and there are clear lines and mediums of effective

communication established, the presence of an accountable culture and innovative culture are not

obvious. In regard to the dimensions articulated by Judge and Douglas, the school appears to be

in a relatively good position related to change readiness.

Vision for Change

Cawsey, Deszca, and Ingols (2016) explain the importance of a vision for change in

writing, "A vision for change clarifies the road ahead. It specifies the purpose of the change and

provides guidance and direction for action. It can provide a powerful pull on employees to

participate positively in the change process" (p. 121). While a relatively clear vision of the future

state has been established earlier in this chapter, it is clear that communication of this vision is of

paramount importance. Kotter states that "the real power of a vision is unleashed only when most

of those involved in an enterprise or activity have a common understanding of its goals and

direction" (2012, p. 87). Strategy for effectively communicating this vision will be explored

further in Chapter 3.

Forces Shaping Change

There are three significant challenges to impact this problem of practice. The first challenge is time as a limited resource. There are many different stakeholders at TIS with many different wants and needs and a finite amount of time available to address them all. There are times set out throughout the year to push initiatives forward with staff, but these times always seem to be at a premium as one initiative or another takes priority, and others take on a subordinate position. Addressing this challenge effectively will require intentional collaborative strategic planning involving all school leaders. Priorities must be established early and an adequate amount of time set aside to see changes through to completion. John Kotter (2012), in explaining why firms fail, identifies that one of the most common errors is failing to create a sufficiently powerful guiding coalition. It will be important to ensure that this improvement plan has the support of a significant number of influential parties from across the faculty and school leadership team.

The second challenge may present itself in the coming months as the IB releases the final details on its new programme enhancements for the primary years programme. Tarc (2009) identified a history of the IB oscillating between an emphasis on growth in order to ensure its sustainability and viability as an organization, and on the more egalitarian emphasis of 'making the world a better place'. The IB has continued to expand into new countries and is now present in many non-democratic countries with questionable human rights records. It is uncertain how firm a stance the IB is prepared to take on issues related to social justice and equity as a particularly strong stance may stand at odds with their interests to expand into these areas.

The third challenge relates to the capacities of key stakeholders in the process of change. There is currently a lack of diversity within the teaching faculty, with the vast majority of teachers coming from western English-speaking countries. The staff is almost exclusively

Caucasian with predominantly Judeo-Christian upbringings. The forces of ethnocentrism and cultural hegemony may be strong within a group that has been, for the most part, members of the dominant social class. It may be advantageous to take advantage of any opportunities that present themselves to add diversity to the teaching faculty. There is potential for the current crisis described earlier to lead to higher turnover. While this presents a challenge to cohesiveness, it provides an opportunity to disrupt the status quo and bring in new people with new ideas and perspectives.

Conclusion

This initial chapter of the organizational improvement plan introduced the problem of practice related to student action and explored The International School's organizational context. The chapter went on to present a leadership position and lens statement, a vision for change, and an examination of organizational change readiness.

Like most meaningful change, this problem of practice presents significant challenge, but also significant opportunity. Increasing the quality and quantity of student action in the primary division of the school not only responds to an explicit recommendation from one of the school's accrediting bodies, but also provides the potential to set the school on a course towards greater actualization of its stated mission and vision.

The next chapter will present a framework for leading the change process informed by John Kotter's stage model of change (Kotter, 2012). Chapter 2 will also provide a critical analysis of the organization and explore a range of possible solutions to address the problem of practice presented in this initial chapter. The second chapter will conclude with a description of appropriate approaches to the leadership of change as well as a careful consideration of leadership ethics related to the proposed changes.

Chapter 2

Planning and Development

Chapter one of this organizational improvement plan explored the organizational context and presented the problem of practice before presenting a leadership-focused vision for change and an analysis of organizational change readiness. This chapter will delve into leadership approaches to the change process and how Kotter's eight-stage model for change will be used to guide the improvement plan. Chapter two will then present a critical organizational analysis before exploring a number of possible solutions for the problem of practice. The chapter will conclude with a consideration of ethical implications related to leading the change process.

Framework for Leading the Change Process

This organizational improvement plan uses Kotter's (2012) eight-stage model as a framework for leading the change process. John P. Kotter first proposed his eight-stage model for leading change in 1996, following an article he wrote in a similar vein in the Harvard Business Review in the summer of 1994 entitled "Leading Change: Why Transformation Efforts Fail" (Kotter, 2012, p. xi). Since that time, the model has gained a great deal of popularity and influence, evidenced by being named as one of Time Magazine's 25 most influential business management books (Medintz, 2011). This problem of practice in general, and the application of this framework in particular, is viewed through a lens of social justice. This lens keeps the overall emphasis of this OIP focused on equity, and action for systemic change. In planning and implementing this OIP, I see myself as a leader using a blend of transformative and distributed leadership to enact change. This change, and the pathways to achieving this change, are guided by an orientation towards social justice. Both the processes, and the outcomes of the processes, must be consistent with the social justice ideals of fairness, justice, and equity.

In 2012, Appelbaum et al. attempted to gather arguments and counterarguments in support of Kotter's model. Their review found support for most of the steps in Kotter's model, but none of the studies examined included instances of organizations working through all eight of the steps. While Appelbaum et. al. (2012) identified that Kotter's model does not specifically address specific difficulties with change, such as a lack of commitment to change, or outward resistance to change, they did conclude that Kotter's model remains a recommendable reference and found no evidence against its use.

In a case study focusing on the implementation of the model in a company in the Australian finance sector, Pollack and Pollack (2015) concluded that use of Kotter's eight-stage model was effective in managing a significant organizational change. While they found that the process itself was indeed linear, as suggested by Kotter's model, they also found that change was "compromised of multiple instances of the process, each with overlapping stages, and each moving at their own speed" (Pollack and Pollack, 2015, p. 64). It is important that these considerations are taken into account through the planning and implementation of this OIP. Instead of taking a strictly linear approach to planning, it is important to allow for flexibility and responsiveness to emerging issues, problems, and opportunities. It will also be important to consider that stages of the process will likely overlap and run concurrently at times while being implemented at TIS.

Kotter's model is further validated by a study out of India involving the CEOs from 40 small-medium enterprise companies. While this study concluded that company leaders desire even more prescriptive tools for managing change, the fundamentals of Kotter's model are sound (Rajan & Ganesan, 2017). Rajan and Ganesan (2017) outline that organizational leaders require further prescription, which may be seen in contrast with the

findings of Pollack and Pollack (2015) and Appelbaum et al. (2012), which suggests the

need to adapt Kotter's model based on an organization's specific context. It may be

reasonable to expect that different leaders have different preferences in this regard,

particularly across different cultures, which allows for this variance in findings. I view the

process of planning and implementation of the changes proposed in this OIP as emergent. It

will be necessary to continually reassess and revise planning in an iterative, responsive,

and flexible manner. This will be accomplished through the use of a plan-do-study-act tool,

which will be further explained in Chapter 3.

Kotter's eight-stage model for leading change has been adopted for this

organizational improvement plan because it provides a reasonable level of prescription

and detail, and because the relevant research considered earlier suggests that the model is

fundamentally sound and widely accepted by practitioners engaging with organizational

change. The structure of the model is open and flexible enough to allow for the effective

incorporation of transformative and distributed leadership and for each stage of the model

to be oriented towards, and guided by, a focus on social justice.

The next section will briefly examine the eight stages of Kotter's (2012) model and

how they will apply to the problem of practice this organizational improvement plan aims

to address. Table 2.1 provides a brief overview of the eight stages of the model.

Stage 1: Establishing a Sense of Urgency. Establishing a sense of urgency and

combating complacency is an important first step in Kotter's change process. He states that

when complacency is high, change goes nowhere because stakeholders do not feel a need

to direct their time and energy towards an initiative they do not see as urgent (Kotter,

2012). In the context of TIS, there is general awareness and understanding of where the

organization is in its cycle of evaluation and accreditation and that there is a need to address recommendations from our accrediting bodies in the short to medium-term. The school's accrediting bodies require the school to undergo an in-depth self-study in the coming year. Integral to this study is examining recommendations from the last cycle of evaluation and noting progress, or lack of. As the school prepares to focus a significant amount of time and attention towards this endeavor, opportunities to create urgency are presented.

Stage 2: Creating the Guiding Coalition. It is important to avoid over-reliance on a single individual to drive change. Kotter proposes carefully constructing a guiding coalition to lead the change process. This coalition must take into account four key characteristics. These are: positional power, expertise, credibility, and leadership (Kotter, 2012). Since the problem of practice that this OIP aims to address is confined to the primary division, it seems likely that this coalition would be made up chiefly of formal and informal leaders from this division. In my role as Assistant Principal, I will put out a call for expressions of interest, but additionally approach individuals who possess positions of formal power to ensure that implementation of this OIP is accompanied by a sense of formal legitimacy. I will seek to involve the Primary Years Programme Coordinator, the Primary Principal, the Early Years Assistant Principal, the Director of Teaching and Learning, and a selection of team leaders and teachers.

Stage 3: Developing a Vision and Strategy. A vision is important because it clarifies the direction of change, it motivates stakeholders to move in the right direction, and it helps coordinate the actions of a variety of people in an efficient way (Kotter, 2012). Kotter describes an effective vision as imaginable, desirable, feasible, focused, flexible, and

communicable (Kotter, 2012). While there is general alignment with the more egalitarian

elements of the IB's mission to 'make the world a better place' among staff at TIS, the

establishment of a shared vision around student action will help to clarify the direction to

move in, and make tangible the steps to take in order to increase the quantity and quality of

student action. I will be involved directly with developing this vision and strategy and use

the IB's requirement of alignment with their mission to influence the development of the

vision and strategy towards a social justice orientation.

Stage 4: Communicating the Change Vision. A vision will only be effective if it is

broadly understood and accepted by the stakeholders within an organization. This OIP will

use the elements of effective communication offered by Kotter (2012). The first element is

simplicity; it is important to keep the communication simple, and easy to understand. The

second element is the use of metaphor or analogy whereby a symbolic representation of

the desired future state is created, which makes it easy for everyone to understand the

vision. The third element is the use of 'multiple forums' for communication. This highlights

the importance of communicating the vision and strategy through as many different

mediums as possible. The fourth element is repetition, because ideas take time and

persistence to sink in deeply. The fifth element is leading by example, whereby leaders

enact the vision they want to see realized. The sixth element is the explaining of seeming

inconsistencies. Since behaviors and actions that are inconsistent with the vision may

undermine credibility, it is important that these inconsistencies are unearthed and

addressed explicitly. The seventh and final element is to 'give-and-take', which refers to

engagement in two-way dialogue with stakeholders, which seems consistent with the

underlying principals of distributed leadership. The elements of leading by example and

explaining inconsistencies is also consistent with transformative leadership, which focuses on issues of justice, fairness, and equity. To be a transformative leader, guided by the ideals of social justice, means acting in an ethical manner throughout the planning and implementation of change. While leading by example and explaining inconsistencies are important in this regard, it is also important that communication works to create transparency, openness, and involvement as well.

Stage 5: Empowering Broad-Based Action. On empowerment, Kotter (2012) writes:

> Effectively completing stages 1 through 4 of the transformation process already does a great deal to empower people. But even when urgency is high, a guiding coalition has created an appropriate vision, and the vision has been well communicated, numerous obstacles can still stop employees from creating needed change. (p. 106)

This stage really focuses on taking efforts to remove barriers to implementation of the desired change. Barriers to be considered include formal structures, which may prevent action, a lack of required skills and expertise, personnel and information systems that make it difficult to implement the change, and leaders who undermine the implementation of the vision. This OIP needs to consider the changes that need to be made to formal structures, training, personnel and information systems, and leadership that may act as barriers to implementation.

Stage 6: Generating Short-Term Wins. In order to establish and maintain momentum towards the desired change, it will be important to generate and celebrate the small steps towards the change. Ultimately, this OIP looks to change teaching practice over

the course of a number of years. Without being able to hold up significant and tangible evidence of progress, momentum is unlikely to be maintained as staff feel pulled in new directions as new priorities are identified. It will be important to take advantage, early and often, of tangible evidence of progress by visibly recognizing the good work of those involved, and celebrating the progress made.

Stage 7: Consolidating Gains and Producing More Change. It will also be important to consider ways in which gains can be consolidated. This will involve examining other practices, policies, and procedures to review alignment with the changes promoted by this OIP. Examining human resource practices, professional development opportunities, appraisal processes, and other policy documents to ensure alignment with the vision of change will help to embed the change and create more change. Hiring and promoting those who show alignment and commitment to the change may be the most tangible way of consolidating the progress made and producing more change.

Stage 8: Anchoring New Approaches to the Culture. In order for the changes proposed by this OIP to be sustainable over the long-term, it is important that the new practices become embedded in the culture of the school. In regards to the problem of practice examined earlier, there appears to be alignment with the ideals of social justice and transformative leadership, but some difficulties in regards to effective implementation or operationalization of these ideals. In order to operationalize these ideals, it is important to focus on a pedagogical shift. Teachers express a desire to support student action, but need help to develop and implement more effective strategies for doing so. The alignment between the current vision, mission, and culture of the school and the desired outcomes of this OIP are promising as this alignment suggests less of a need for a fundamental shift in

beliefs, but more of a shift in practice. Nevertheless, it is important to consider how this last

step can be used to ensure the long-term sustainability of the change. Kotter (2012)

suggests a few strategies that are useful to consider in this context. First, he suggests

ensuring that the positive results of the change are brought to the attention of staff. He

additionally suggests that anchoring change in a culture requires a great deal of dialogue as

people need support to work through changes. He also suggests that leaders consider

staffing turnover and promotion in cases where people are, or are not, aligned with the

new direction of change. These are considerations that will be taken into account within

this OIP.

Table 2.1

Kotter's Eight-Stage Change Process at TIS

Stage of Change Process	Planning and Implementation at TIS
Stage 1: Establishing a sense of urgency	Leveraging the requirements provided by external authorizing and accrediting bodies and up-coming self-study and school evaluation to create urgency to address this OIP's problem of practice.
Stage 2: Creating the guiding coalition	Bringing together a range of stakeholders holding positions of formal and informal power and influence within the organization, recognizing that influence, knowledge, and expertise is distributed throughout the organization.
Stage 3: Developing a vision and strategy	Drawing on the collective expertise distributed throughout the organization to create a compelling vision for the future which connects to the school's overall vision and mission and focuses on fairness, justice, and equity.
Stage 4: Communicating the change vision	Communicating regularly through a variety of mediums to keep stakeholders informed and engaged in the process of change. Communication will also involve collection of feedback which will be used to reflect upon and amend change plans in an iterative fashion throughout the change process.

Stage 5: Empowering broad-based action	Empowering stakeholders by making changes to formal structures, training, personnel and information systems, and leadership that may act as barriers to implementation.
Stage 6: Generating short-term wins	Taking advantage, early and often, of tangible evidence of progress by visibly recognizing the good work of those involved, and celebrating the progress made.
Stage 7: Consolidating gains and producing more change	Reviewing human resource (hiring) practices, professional development opportunities, appraisal processes, and other policies and procedures to embed the change and create more change.
Stage 8: Anchoring new approaches in the culture	Communicating positive results of the change to stakeholders. Consideration of staffing turnover and promotion in relation to alignment, or disalignment, with changes.

Adapted from Kotter, 2012, p. 23.

Kotter's eight-stage model provides a useful framework to guide and structure the planning and implementation of this OIP. The planning within each of these stages is viewed through, and informed by, a social justice lens. Leadership and implementation of each of the stages is guided by a blend of transformative and distributed leadership practices. The next section presents a critical organizational analysis and important considerations for the planning and implementation of this organizational improvement plan.

Critical Organizational Analysis

In order to effectively implement the change process using Kotter's model described earlier, it is necessary to carefully consider the current state of the organization in relation to the desired future state. Bolman and Deal's (2017) framing theory provides a useful lens through which to examine both the current and desired future state of the organization. Bolman and Deal's framing theory is useful in this regard because it asks change agents to

broaden the perspectives through which they view a set of problems and possible

solutions. Bolman and Deal describe a 'frame' as a mental model:

> A set of ideas and assumptions – that you carry in your head to help you understand
>
> and negotiate a particular "territory." A good frame makes it easier to know what
>
> you are up against and, ultimately, what you can do about it. (2017, p. 11)

While it is useful, to some degree, to consider the organization through all four of Bolman

and Deal's frames, for the purpose of succinctness, the human resource frame and the

symbolic frame will be focused on as part of the organizational analysis. The rationale for

focusing on these two frames will be explained in the sections below.

The Human Resource Frame: The human resource frame really focuses on people.

In order to implement change using distributed and transformative leadership, it is

essential to draw on the energy, resources, and collective expertise of the people within the

organization. For this reason, a focus on this particular frame is important. Two of the core

assumptions inherent in the human resource frame are that the purpose of an organization

is to serve the needs of people, and that a good 'fit' between individuals and the

organization makes for meaningful and satisfying work (Bolman and Deal, 2017). This core

assumption about the organization serving the needs of people links directly with the

conceptualization of distributed leadership explored in the previous chapter. The

assumption related to 'fit' also links to a number of Kotter's stages, particularly the stages

focusing on developing and communicating vision. A compelling vision, drawing on

concepts from critical theory, such as fairness, justice, and equity, will help to motivate and

inspire organizational stakeholders and contribute to the 'fit' between the individuals in

the TIS community and TIS as an organization. A greater fit contributes to greater

commitment to realizing the vision and mission of the school, which should be aligned with

the IB's mission to 'make the world a better place'. The aim of this organizational

improvement plan, which is focused on encouraging and empowering students to take

action based on their learning, aligns with the egalitarian element of the mission and the

broader aims of transformative leadership and social justice.

The Symbolic Frame: The symbolic frame is intertwined with the human resource

frame explored earlier, in that the fit between individual and organization can only really

be understood through the messages and meanings conveyed through the symbolic acts of

leaders and other stakeholders within an organization. The symbolic frame focuses less on

events and actions, and more on the meaning that is constructed by stakeholders in

interpreting these events and actions. It "emphasizes the idea that symbols mediate the

meaning of work" (Bolman & Deal, 2017, p. 264). A few assumptions inherent in this frame

are worth considering. First is the concept that symbols are used to provide direction and

reduce ambiguity, and that they can be used to inspire. Next is the concept that events and

processes within the organization indicate the beliefs, values, and culture of the

organization and these help people find purpose in the work they do. Also worth

considering is the concept that the culture of an organization unites people in the pursuit of

common goals (Bolman & Deal, 2017). This frame is useful in considering how the

organization's current actions match with the stated mission and vision of the organization,

as well as the desired changes this OIP seeks to address. When critically examining the

current state of the organization, it is important to be able to examine not only the written

mission and vision, but also to examine whether or not the same values and beliefs implied

through the vision and mission are consistent with the actions of leaders and other

stakeholders within the organization.

There is an assumption here that teachers, school leaders, and other stakeholders at

TIS will feel committed and aligned with a vision for change that is aimed at creating a

more just and equitable world through the promotion of student action. If such ideals can

become embedded in the culture of the school and become reflected, not only in written

documents, but also in the symbolic actions and processes that are enacted on a daily basis,

then this improvement plan stands a much greater chance at success.

Current State

Commitment to shared values: When examining the current state of the

organization through Bolman and Deal's (2017) human resource frame, it is useful to begin

with looking at fit between the goals of the organization and the needs of people within the

organization. Bolman and Deal state that, "When individuals find satisfaction and meaning

in work, organizations profit from the effective use of their talent and energy. But when

satisfaction and meaning are lacking, individuals withdraw, resist, or rebel" (2017, p. 155).

Teachers tend to be attracted to their profession for intrinsic reasons. These reasons

include the promise of intellectual fulfilment and making a contribution to society (OECD,

2005). In exploring why teachers are attracted to work in international schools, Hayden

and Thompson (2008) list a number of factors including salary and benefits, opportunities

to experience new cultures, professional satisfaction, and commitment to a program such

as the IB. It is important that change initiatives, including the one explored in this OIP, are

informed by the factors that have drawn teachers to their profession in the first place.

Embedding these factors into the plan will help to establish a shared vision that teachers

can feel inspired by and will help them feel an alignment between their own needs, and the direction of the organization.

Understanding and commitment to action: In November and December of 2016, a series of staff meetings were held focusing on student action. Staff were asked to review their units of teaching and learning across the year and identify instances where student action was effectively supported, as well as identify any opportunities to better support student action. Following these meetings, staff were asked to provide feedback via an anonymous survey. A synthesis of this feedback showed a desire for teachers to have more guidance and support for developing their pedagogy to better support students to take action. Teachers communicated that they understood what action is and that they placed a high value upon it, but wanted more guidance in how to effectively support it through their pedagogical approaches (Hawkins, 2016). This data indicated that teachers do value the importance of student action and that support for developing pedagogical approaches, which aim to increase the quantity and quality of student action, may be well received. The fact that staff value student action in this way supports the suggestion from the OECD (2005) and Hayden and Thompson (2008) that teachers are attracted to their profession, at least in part, for egalitarian reasons. This also suggests that teachers will feel a sense of alignment and commitment to the changes proposed by the OIP.

Staff turnover and retention: A central focus of Bolman and Deal's (2017) human resource frame is staff turnover and retention. Currently, at TIS, there is very low teacher turnover across the school. The primary division have not experienced a year with more than 5% turnover in the last six years. In a few of those years, there was no turnover at all. Such a high rate of retention provides excellent opportunities for continuity and allows

school leaders to focus time and attention on other initiatives rather than on teacher orientation and induction. On the other hand, this limits the school's opportunity to use hiring and promotion to effect change related to alignment, or lack of, with the new direction of change, as Kotter (2012) suggests as one strategy for anchoring new changes into the culture.

Community demographics: Additionally, the relative cultural homogeneity amongst the staff could be an issue in planning for change, which incorporates issues of cultural hegemony. Currently, the vast majority of teaching staff are from developed, western countries. The school's annual Community Report shows that more than one third of teaching staff are from the United Kingdom, and more than 20% are from either the United States, Canada, or Australia (The International School, 2018). In the primary school, every member of the teaching faculty is Caucasian, and there are no faculty members of an ethnicity or nationality originating from countries in South America, Africa, Asia, or the Middle-East. When expanding to include non-teaching staff, there are cooks, cleaners, and bus drivers from a wider range of countries and ethnicities, but this is still limited, considering the school's student body represents over 63 nationalities. When considering this human resource context through a lens of social justice, some potential challenges emerge. As touched on in the first chapter of this OIP, the concept of cultural hegemony (Gramsci et al., 1992), provides an opportunity to identify elements of society that are most in need of transformation. A lack of access to teachers and other individuals from a full range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds limits the opportunities to uncover the hegemonic forces of the dominant social class. Future hiring practices could work, at least in part, to address this issue.

Connectedness and relationships: The low staff turnover mentioned earlier also relates to Bolman and Deal's (2017) symbolic frame in that a sense of meaning and purpose is a factor that is likely to encourage staff to stay at TIS. The values, beliefs, and shared meanings of the community play out in a multitude of ways. The faculty is a tight-knit community that have been together for a long time. The children of staff members have grown up together, in many cases starting in kindergarten and going all the way through to high school graduation. In more than one case, students have returned to the school as interns or student teachers. The faculty have mourned deaths together, and celebrated one another's weddings, births, and promotions. The school takes pride in this strong sense of community and togetherness. This sense of community is so tangible that even first-time visitors to the school frequently comment on it. Bolman and Deal (2017) see team building as a spiritual undertaking in which leaders create a community united by shared faith and culture. TIS is currently well situated in regards to this shared faith and culture, as a strong feeling of connectedness, and focus on the importance of relationships reverberates throughout the organization.

Action as a curricular element: Bolman and Deal state that, "From an institutional perspective, organizations are judged as much on appearance as on outcomes" (2017, p. 293). To this end, it is useful to consider the tangible appearances of student action as the frequency and nature of such appearances symbolize the organization's commitment to action. Unlike more traditional approaches to curriculum, the IB's primary years programme takes a transdisciplinary approach to teaching and learning. Instead of organizing curriculum around subject disciplines, the organizing element of the PYP are six transdisciplinary themes. These themes are shown in the table below, along with their descriptions.

Table 2.2

The PYP's Transdisciplinary Themes

Name	Description
Who we are (WWA)	An inquiry into the nature of the self; beliefs and values; personal, physical, mental, social and spiritual health; human relationships including families, friends, communities, and cultures; rights and responsibilities; what it means to be human.
Where we are in place and time (WWAPT)	An inquiry into orientation in place and time; personal histories; homes and journeys; the discoveries, explorations and migrations of humankind; the relationships between and the interconnectedness of individuals and civilizations, from local and global perspectives.
How we express ourselves (HWEO)	An inquiry into the ways in which we discover and express ideas, feelings, nature, culture, beliefs and values; the ways in which we reflect on, extend and enjoy our creativity; our appreciation of the aesthetic.
How the world works (HTWW)	An inquiry into the natural world and its laws; the interaction between the natural world (physical and biological) and human societies; how humans use their understanding of scientific principles; the impact of scientific and technological advances on society and on the environment.
How we organize ourselves (HWOO)	An inquiry into the interconnectedness of human-made systems and communities; the structure and function of organizations; societal decision-making; economic activities and their impact on humankind and the environment.
Sharing the planet (STP)	An inquiry into rights and responsibilities in the struggle to share finite resources with other people and with other living things; communities and the relationships within and between them; access to equal opportunities; peace and conflict resolution.

Adapted from IBO, 2009, p. 12.

Teachers are required to work together collaboratively with their teaching colleagues to plan units of inquiry based on each of these transdisciplinary themes. These themes incorporate the various subject disciplines such as literacy, mathematics, social studies, etc. While some subject-based teaching exists outside of these six themes, these are the principle organizing elements of the curriculum. Schools are required to review their programme of inquiry, which is the entirety of all of the units across all of the years of primary, on a semi-regular basis to ensure that there is adequate articulation both horizontally (across each grade level) and vertically (in continuum through the grades). Teachers are required to document their planning for each unit, and reflect on the outcomes of each unit in a PYP planner. The planning process and format for documenting are prescribed as a requirement by the International Baccalaureate. At TIS, planning and reflection for each of these units are housed in an online curriculum mapping database.

In order to map out the appearance of student action, it is possible to use the database to explore teacher reflections related to student action. An initial review of the content on this database showed that there were a number of instances of no student action being recorded. The section of the planner asking for teachers to share examples of student action were left blank. There were no indications of whether or not this indicated an absence of examples of student action, or if teachers simply were not being diligent in documenting such cases. In the table below, each row represents a grade level starting with early-years 1 (3-year-olds) and extending to grade 5 (10-year-olds). Each column represents one of the transdisciplinary themes introduced earlier.

Table 2. 3

Examples of Student Action Appearing in Curriculum Mapping Database

	WWA	WWAPT	HWEO	HTWW	STP	HWOO
EY1	No	Yes	Yes	No	n/a	n/a
EY2	Yes	n/a	No	No	No	n/a
KG	No	n/a	No	No	No	n/a
G1	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
G2	No	No	Yes	No	No	No
G3	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No
G4	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
G5	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes
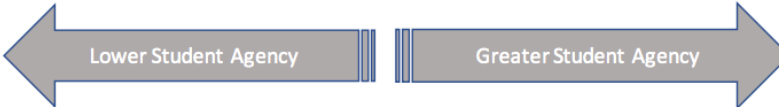
Data gathered from TIS' curriculum mapping database showing frequency with which examples of student action were recorded by teachers.

This data was examined further by using Hart's Ladder of Participation (Hart, 1992) as a lens through which to judge the quality of student action. Hart revisited his model in a more recent article, and while he calls for others to present newer models to push thinking about children's participation forward, the model is still presented as relevant and useful (Hart 2008). His ladder, which he retrospectively describes as a "scale of competence" (p. 24), describes various levels of participation and non-participation (See Appendix A), with higher levels of child-participation at the top of the ladder and non-participation at the bottom. In further analyzing the data from the curriculum mapping database, Hart's ladder has been used to rank the quality of the action. The inherent assumption here is that the

greater the level of student involvement, the higher the quality of the action. An additional organizing element that has been used to analyze the data are the categories of action articulated by the International Baccalaureate (2017); Participation, Advocacy, Social Justice, Social Entrepreneurship, and Lifestyle Choices. Findings from this analysis are shown in the table below. All types of non-participation, as identified in Hart's ladder have been combined into one column entitled 'non-participation'. In the table below, the final two levels from Hart's ladder have been inverted to place the 'child-initiated and directed' category at the highest level, with Hart's eighth level being conceptualized as 'child-adult collaboration'.

Table 2. 4

Quality and Type of Student Action Appearing in Curriculum Mapping Database

	Non-Participation	Assigned but Informed	Consulted and informed	Adult-Initiated, Shared decisions with children	Child-Adult Collaboration	Child-Initiated and Directed
Participation Being actively involved in the learning community and showing commitment to contributing as individuals and as members of a group.				1	7	5
Advocacy Taking action individually or collectively to publicly support positive social, environmental or political change.					1	
Social justice Taking action for positive change relating to human rights, equality and equity. Being concerned with the advantages and disadvantages within society, and with social well-being and justice for all.					1	
Social entrepreneurship Supporting positive social change through responding to the needs of local, national and global communities; applying prior knowledge and skills to identify and address challenges and opportunities in innovative, resourceful and sustainable ways.					4	2
Lifestyle choices Making positive lifestyle changes in response to learning.				1	2	4

Note. Adapted from Children's participation: From tokenism to citizenship (p. 8), by R. Hart, 1992, Florence, Italy: UNICEF International Child Development Centre and from The learner in the enhanced PYP (p. 5), by International Baccalaureate, 2017, Cardiff, WA: Peterson House.

This data shows that only 12 out of 42 units contained any examples of action at all. From these 12 units, 28 examples of student action were identified. When plotted onto the above table, a few things become evident. Overall, the examples being recorded show a high level of student agency and involvement. It is possible that examples of action involving lower levels of student agency were selectively discarded by teachers as not worth documenting. A moderate portion of the examples fell into the categories of social entrepreneurship and lifestyle choices, while there were few examples of social justice or advocacy.

In addition to the examples of action identified in the curriculum mapping database, there are a number of other examples of action that can be observed around the school. These additional examples symbolize the commitment to student action. These included fundraising events aimed at supporting school charities, a trade fair that the grade 4 students organize, which raises funds to make loans through a micro-finance organization, student council initiatives involving raising school spirit, and raising awareness of issues that are important to them, student musicians performing at an old-age home in the local community, and students leading the weekly school assembly as MCs. The more easily quantified data from the curriculum mapping database will be reviewed regularly during the change process. Processes to reflect on this quantitative data, as well as the more qualitative data to inform on-going decision making will be elaborated on further in Chapter 3.

Future State

Ideally, the future state realized through the implementation of this organizational improvement plan will involve changes to teaching and learning that lead to a greater quantity and quality of student action. If such changes are successful, it can be expected that a review of data on the curriculum mapping database will reveal a much higher quantity of student action. A reasonable goal within the next two years would be to see at least half of the units of inquiry contain tangible examples of student action. A secondary goal would be to see a greater range in terms of the type of student action identified. It appears from the data explored earlier that there is significant opportunity for increasing the examples of action that fall into the categories of social justice or advocacy.

From a human resource perspective, it will be necessary to incorporate ways of connecting people with purpose. The intent of student action should appeal to the same intrinsic factors that attracted teachers to their chosen profession. The review of the school's vision and mission, which is currently underway, provides further opportunity for articulating the purpose of the work teachers do with children. Further clarifying commitment to making the world a better place can provide a provocation for thinking deeply about the outcomes of teaching and learning related to student action.

Staff have identified that they have a desire to support and encourage student action, but want opportunities and support to develop their own professional practice in this regard. This organizational improvement plan must take advantage of the commitment that teaching faculty already have by providing them with the direction, support, and guidance they need to increase the quantity and quality of student action. As a school leader, I must play a central role in providing this direction, support, and guidance, but I

must also ensure that I am drawing on the collective experience and expertise that is distributed throughout the organization. My role must be to set up processes and procedures to allow collaboration to take place and informal leadership to emerge over time.

While turnover of teaching staff has been very low in the past, this may change in the future. Even if turnover remains low, a greater emphasis on hiring teachers with desire, commitment, and experience with developing and supporting student action can be targeted. Teacher appraisal can also incorporate elements related to supporting student action so that feedback can be provided to teachers to support improvement to their teaching practice. My continued active involvement in teacher recruitment, hiring, and appraisal will provide me with the opportunities to hire, develop, and support teacher development in this regard.

On a symbolic level, opportunities to further elevate and celebrate student action should be taken advantage of. Articles in the monthly school newsletter, dedicated time at assemblies, parent information sessions focusing on student action, and visits to classrooms by school leaders are all avenues through which action can be further celebrated. When action is celebrated regularly, its status and importance is elevated in the eyes of all stakeholders, and this can become further enshrined as a valued element of school culture. I currently provide articles for the newsletter thrice yearly, and have the opportunity to provide writing more regularly if I wish. This will be an important opportunity for me to promote the vision for change throughout the community. I also organize and lead assemblies on a weekly basis, which include all primary students and teachers, and a selection of parents. I also work together closely with the other assistant

principal and the primary curriculum coordinator to develop and present workshops to

parents. Developing and delivering workshops focusing on student action is another way to

elevate and celebrate the role of action throughout our community. Each of these actions

also provide the potential to involve others and actively share leadership. I will invite other

staff members to co-author articles, co-lead workshops, or present their own thinking at

assemblies.

In addition to elevating and celebrating student action throughout the school

community, it is important that changes to pedagogy take place. An in-depth, shared

understanding and definition of what student action is must be developed, involving all

members of the primary teaching faculty. This shared understanding must lead teachers to

adopting a broadened understanding of what action is, and the various forms it may take.

Teaching practices to investigate, support, model, and celebrate student action must be

developed, and adequate training must be given to teachers. In addition to developing a

shared understanding of action and developing new pedagogical practices, curriculum

must also be reviewed to ensure that the content is meaningful and engaging to students.

Curriculum must deal with significant issues that are meaningful enough to children to

inspire them to want to do something about what they have learned.

While I sit in a position of formal leadership within the school, there is a prevailing

model of distributed leadership that is widely practiced throughout the organization. All

changes and initiatives will be approached as collaborative endeavors, with invitations to

share leadership and involve others. I will work within a spirit of collaboration and

involvement to present an orientation towards social justice and a transformative view of

change. My voice will be one among many, but as an individual who has a high level of

credibility within the organization, aiming to enact changes that are widely consistent with

the values and beliefs of the organization and which appeal to teachers on an egalitarian

basis, it seems likely that I will be able to influence change in the desired direction.

This section presented a critical organizational analysis in the context of both the

current state of the organization and the desired future state. The next section explores a

range of possible solutions to address the problem of practice presented earlier.

Possible Solutions to Address the Problem of Practice

In order to address the problem of practice, four possible solutions will be

considered. The proceeding section will introduce each of these four possible approaches

to addressing the problem of practice and present the benefits and drawbacks of each. One

solution is chosen to inform the development of the organizational improvement plan.

Solution 1: Maintain the Status Quo

The choice to not take any significant action is a realistic possibility as the strategic

priorities of the school are presently drawn away from matters of curriculum and

pedagogy, focusing more on broader challenges related to finance and facility development.

While it is reasonable to expect the school's accrediting bodies to review the

recommendations from the previous accreditation and evaluation cycle, and expect to see

progress on the points they raised, it would not be surprising for them to consider the

rationale for not fully addressing all recommendations, considering the more pressing

issues facing the school.

Since the recommendations from the last evaluation visit came from the IB report,

rather than the other accrediting bodies, it is most useful to consider the approach and

philosophy driving the IB evaluation process. The IB states that they are aware of the

hurdles of administering the findings:

> For each school the implementation of an IB programme is a journey and that the
>
> school will meet these standards and practices to varying degrees along the way.
>
> However, it is expected that the school makes a commitment towards meeting all
>
> the standards, practices and programme requirements. (IBO, 2010, p. 1)

This passage suggests that varying levels of fidelity with the IB's standards and practices

are expected. The question is whether or not they would view the progress made thus far

as representative of an adequate commitment or not.

Framing the Solution: When this approach is considered through Bolman and

Deal's symbolic frame, it is important to consider their suggestion that "organizations are

judged as much on appearance as on outcomes" (2017, p. 293). What is suggested by the

narrative that is created around the choice to not act on this particular recommendation

from the IB? It may suggest less fidelity with the IB's mission and philosophy, or it may

suggest that the school is more committed to facilities and finance than it is to the

development of students who will one day go out into the world and act in socially just

ways. As a leader within the organization, I would find it difficult to present a compelling

rationale for maintaining the status quo given that the recommendations from the IB

pertain to what is considered an essential element of the primary years programme.

When considered through the human resource frame, one may consider this option

as a lost opportunity to engage and inspire staff members and other members of the school

community in directing energy and resources towards an altruistic purpose.

Benefits and Drawbacks: Not taking concrete action to address this problem of practice avoids engaging stakeholders in a time-consuming change process. It also requires no other resources and does not immediately impact the day-to-day teaching and learning in the school. Staff are able to continue with their current practices, and are not confronted with tackling difficult issues related to the purpose of schooling and the desired outcomes for students. Standing pat when faced with concrete recommendations from an accrediting body also situates me as a leader without intention and purpose and may call into question the efficacy of my action, or lack of.

While it is unlikely that the IB would make their accreditation contingent upon addressing this particular issue, it would be reasonable to expect that they might consider a failure to act on their previous recommendations indicative of a lack of alignment with IB philosophy. It is possible that they would identify this issue as one that must be addressed in the short term following the next evaluation visit, rather than just a recommendation. This could damage the image of the school and perceived credibility of school leaders, including myself.

Staff and other stakeholders could possibly view the lack of action as an indication that the organization does not see itself as a partner with the IB. Stakeholders could then start to view IB policy and requirements as optional, rather than required within the organization. Given my own philosophical alignment with the mission and vision of the IB, I would find it difficult to support this solution.

Required Resources: A significant upside of avoiding or delaying action would be that it would require very little time and would not consume other resources. Since this problem was identified through the process of school evaluation by an external body, it is

highly likely that maintaining the status quo would negatively impact the next evaluation

cycle and that the school would be forced to take action with greater urgency in the coming

years.

Solution 2: Delegate to Professional Learning Community Group

Currently, all members of staff are involved in professional learning communities

(PLCs). Teaching staff have formed groups around areas of shared interest and have been

provided with structures to support collaborative inquiry into their respective areas of

interest. It is a requirement that these areas of interest focus directly on teaching and

learning and have some sort of measurable or observable impact on student learning.

Several staff meetings times have been set aside for groups to meet together to plan actions

and reflect together. As a practice that is now becoming embedded into the culture of the

school, the PLCs provide an opportunity to drive change forward.

Assuming a small group of interested teachers could be gathered together who

share an interest in developing more effective practices to support student action, the PLC

framework that is currently in place could provide a context for changing practice. This

would drive change from a very grassroots level as it would be based on teacher dialogue,

collaboration, and reflection on practice. The practice of sharing findings at the end of the

school year would be an opportunity to spread the knowledge and expertise gained by

these individuals more broadly across the school. This group could also be tasked with

developing recommendations for the rest of the primary based on their conclusions.

Framing the Solution: Using the human resource frame to consider this solution, it

becomes evident that the PLCs are an opportunity for teaching staff to engage in an area of

personal and professional interest. The members of the PLC would be self-selected based

on their own personal interests and motivations to support student action. The motivation

level of those engaged in the PLC would likely be quite high and this group of professionals

could feel quite empowered by the task of coming up with recommendations for the rest of

the primary division based on their findings. This approach is consistent with distributed

leadership and is aimed at change that aligns with transformative leadership. I would be

able to get involved with the PLC as a participant and exert some influence as a

collaborator.

In terms of the symbolic frame, this approach does send a positive message to the

rest of the organization. It represents trust in the professionalism of teachers to address

broader educational issues that impact them and their students. This approach also

provides the opportunity to draw on the stories and narratives that teachers present

around their interactions with students. Sharing these experiences with one another, and

with the rest of the staff would be part of the process of reflecting together as a PLC group,

and sharing conclusions outside of the group with the rest of the staff. These narratives

reinforce what is valued and important to individuals and the broader community.

Benefits and Drawbacks: Having a solution driven by teachers at a grassroots level

provides legitimacy to the work they do in the school, and sends an important message

about how school leaders trust in the professionalism of the teaching staff, which is

consistent with the principals of distributed leadership. This approach also takes

advantage of structures and processes already established in the school. The process of

encouraging individuals to step forward to embrace this particular problem as a

professional learning community would not involve much in terms of time or resources; it

would simply be a matter of drawing attention to the fact that it is an issue that needs to be

addressed, and asking the staff who would be interested in being involved. The structures currently in place would then guide this group's work over the course of a school year.

This approach does come with significant risk. By delegating the problem to a group of teachers, school leaders lose control over the process and outcome of change. While the PLC group would likely come up with a set of concrete ways in which teachers could encourage an increase in quality and quantity of student action, there is no guarantee that their recommendations would lead to the desired outcome. The fact that teachers are faced with significant time pressures could lead them to embracing solutions that are quick and easy rather than most effective. While I would be able to be involved as a member of the PLC, my ability to influence the direction of change may be limited as I am situated more as a collaborator than as a formal leader within such a context.

Required Resources: Professional learning communities currently consume a significant amount of the time that is set aside for staff to meet outside of regular teaching hours. Over one third of all of the weekly staff meeting times are dedicated to teachers working through the PLC structures. If the PLC comes up with tangible actions to support student action, at some point they would need more time to be made available to share these actions more broadly and have a greater impact on teaching and learning throughout the school. Other resources could also be required depending on the outcomes of the PLC.

Solution 3: Implement a System of Checks and Balances

This solution focuses on the use of structures, policies, and operational practices in order to respond to the problem of practice. The analysis of the units of inquiry across the primary in the previous section showed that a number of units contained no reflections from teachers at all, despite this being a required element of the planning process. While

completing the planning documents is required by both the IB and the school itself, there

has been a lack of oversight to ensure that the planners are actually being completed. It is

possible that the infrequency of student action being documented on planners is a case of

underreporting.

It is possible to communicate the expectation that there are sections of the planners

requiring collaborative teaching teams to reflect on the effectiveness of inquiry,

particularly in response to the questions on the planner, which reads, "What student-

initiated actions arose from the learning? Record student-initiated actions taken by

individuals or groups showing their ability to reflect, to choose and to act" (IBO, 2009, p.

40). The assistant principal, and Primary Years Programme (PYP) Coordinator attend

grade-level meetings weekly, so they have the opportunity to direct discussion towards

reflection on action and to document examples of student action either themselves, or

through delegation to other members of the respective teams. The PYP Coordinator could

be tasked with checking that each team has completed this section of the planner following

each unit of inquiry. In cases where this has not been completed, he could lead a discussion

himself, or delegate to the leader of the team. Regular reviews could be conducted and

teams provided with reminders, or more direct requests that the work is completed. As the

assistant principal, I could check regularly on progress and direct the appropriate

stakeholders to complete sections of the planner fully and within a reasonable timeframe.

Doing so would rely on formal and official power associated with my leadership position.

Completion of this documentation could be incorporated into the appraisal process

for team leaders so that appraisers would have the opportunity to give formal feedback to

these leaders in cases where the documentation was not being regularly completed. As one

of the school leaders who completes staff appraisals, I would have direct influence on this

process.

Framing the Solution: From the perspective of the human-resource frame, this

approach may be seen as overly directive or authoritative. Currently, the culture of the

school is based on the assumption of professionalism and an atmosphere of trust. Using a

system of checks and balances may undermine this sense of trust as individuals feel that

their professional conduct is being checked up on, and failure to comply with the directive

regarding documentation results in swift responses questioning their actions. This

approach turns the attention away from connecting people with a sense of purpose, and

turns attention towards accountability measures. While I possess the legitimate power to

take such actions, doing so would likely undermine the sense of trust and collegiality I

possess in the eyes of the staff I work with.

From the perspective of the symbolic frame, this approach creates a narrative

around accountability. The implicit message that staff may receive is that they are not to be

trusted and that they will be told by senior leaders what they need to do, then they will be

checked up on to ensure that they have followed through on the directions. Time and

attention are drawn away from deep, meaningful engagements with students aimed at

supporting them to take action based on their learning, and focused instead on the

superficial measurement and documentation of the action.

Benefits and Drawbacks: The primary benefits of this approach are that it is

relatively simple to implement; most of the work is deferred to teachers or teaching teams,

it does not require any significant expenditure, and it relies on processes and structures

that are already in place. If communicated tactfully, teachers may be able to see the request

to document more thoroughly as reasonable, especially in light of the recommendation of the IB in this regard. It is also possible that teams take on this directive and make significant progress, without it becoming necessary to check on their work and follow up on incidences of failure to comply.

This solution, however, could negatively impact the satisfaction the teaching staff feel with their work as attention is directed away from trust and towards accountability if it becomes necessary to hold individuals, or teams, accountable for a lack of compliance or fidelity with the request. While a case could be made that the intended changes are consistent with the ideals of transformative leadership, the directive actions that I would need to take would not be consistent with distributed leadership.

A more significant concern would be that the solution may be only superficial. This solution really just focuses on documentation, and not on actually changing teaching practice to ensure that children are adequately supported in developing the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to take action based on their learning.

Required Resources: This approach would consume a significant amount of my individual time and energy as it would require regular monitoring of the database, follow-up meetings with individual team leaders, or entire grade-level teams, and an increase in the number of formal appraisals completed annually. It would also require a review of the appraisal policy to ensure that requirements pertaining to documenting student learning are made clear and explicit to teaching staff. This solution would also require more time dedicated by staff and grade-level teams to bureaucratic processes. This time and effort would likely lead to an increase in the quantity of reported instances of student action, but

would be unlikely to increase the actual instances or to lead to any fundamental changes to teaching and learning.

Solution 4: Develop and Implement a new Model of Curriculum and Pedagogy

In order to make meaningful changes to how student action is supported, encouraged, facilitated, and celebrated, teachers may be supported to develop new pedagogical approaches. When curriculum is viewed through the lens of social justice and transformative leadership, opportunities and challenges present themselves. The IB's primary years programme offers a curriculum framework, within which schools have the autonomy to develop their particular pedagogical approaches and curriculum expectations and outcomes. While the IB provides a philosophical orientation to curriculum focused on the development of intercultural understanding, multilingualism, and engagement with significant content (IBO, 2013), it provides a high degree of flexibility for schools to develop their curriculum and pedagogy within the framework they provide.

In order to support teachers in this regard, it would be useful to develop a model to support teaching and learning that sits comfortably within the framework provided by the IB. Such a model would need to be developed collaboratively with staff. An example that could be presented as a starting point for collaboration and discussion could contain four central elements. The first of these would be the five categories of action the IB has presented (IBO, 2017). The second element would be Hart's Ladder of Participation (Hart, 1992) as a tool to test the level of student participation. The third element would be an iterative cycle of reflection and feedback based loosely on the model provided by the IB (IBO, 2009). The fourth and final element could be approaches to pedagogy including a focus on significant and meaningful content, the incorporation of critical pedagogy, a focus

on global citizenship skills and dispositions, and a focus on the development of compassion and empathy.

The IB's five categories of action (participation, advocacy, social justice, social entrepreneurship, and lifestyle choices) would help to organize and identify examples of student action. Using these categories, students and teachers could be supported in broadening their understandings of the different forms that action may take. These categories can also be used to model, identify, and celebrate action when it occurs in the classroom and across the school community.

Hart's Ladder of Participation may be used as a tool for reflecting on the level of student participation in action. It can be used to broaden thinking around the range of forms that action takes, and also supporting teachers to think about their role in the process of working with children. Teachers may benefit equally from considering examples of action with low student participation as they would from considering examples of high student participation, as the lower levels of participation may be opportunities for adults to model action and engage in conversations with children about why action is important and the various forms it might take. The brief analysis of documented action explored earlier indicated a lack of examples of action with lower levels of student participation. This may indicate that teachers are not currently identifying the opportunities presented by such examples. As a leader, I would be able to establish processes to bring people together in collaborative dialogue to distribute leadership and decision-making. Presenting this example model would not only provide a starting point for guiding discussion, but also present an anchor that influences the final outcome of such collaboration.

While the IB already places an emphasis on student engagement with global citizenship, which it terms international mindedness (IBO, 2009), and significant content (IBO, 2013), it does not place an explicit emphasis on critical pedagogy. Critical pedagogy is teaching that is "aware of the political nature of education" (Christensen and Aldridge, 2013, p.3) because it desires to have a sound understanding of many aspects involved in education, critical pedagogy:

> Seeks to comprehend the link between knowledge and power; is contextually attentive; promotes human rights, justice, and democracy; is a process of transformation; is a way of thinking; pays attention to gender, class, race, and ethnicity issues and its relationship with oppression/liberation; moves both teacher and student in a horizontal relationship as subjects; challenges the status quo; and is continuously evolving. (Christensen and Aldridge, 2013, p. 3)

While this definition is somewhat nebulous, it is important that teachers are supported to develop specific approaches and strategies to promote critical approaches in their classrooms. Closely connected to the concept of critical pedagogy is the development of compassion and empathy. Development of compassion for others and feeling empathy for those who are less fortunate or are marginalized members of society is supported through dialogue and interaction with diverse populations of people. International schools are good contexts to come into contact with families from diverse nationalities, ethnicities, and religions. While there tends to be a lack of socio-economic diversity, it is possible to actively pursue resources that portray a range of experiences from people of all sorts of backgrounds. Increasing teacher awareness of the diversity of the resources, content, and approaches they incorporate into the classroom can help support students to better

understand the perspectives of those who are different than them and help develop

compassion and empathy. A central focus of my involvement in collaborative efforts to

establish a model of teaching and learning, and the development of associated teaching and

learning practices would be to ensure that critical pedagogy remains a central element in

the model that is developed.

Framing the Solution: From the perspective of the human resource frame, this

approach could be seen as quite constructive. It does depend on the professional capital

and collective expertise of the teaching staff, and works to connect people with purpose. It

seems likely that teaching staff would feel aligned with the altruistic intentions of shifting

curriculum and pedagogy in this direction. Staff working at TIS generally see themselves as

aligned with the egalitarian focus of the IB to 'make the world a better place', so this

approach likely appeals to that same sense of intrinsic motivation. I would seek to

capitalize on this sense of alignment to present a compelling rationale for critical pedagogy

to be an essential element of any shift in pedagogy.

From the perspective of the symbolic frame, it seems likely that such actions are

viewed as aligned with the school's mission and the mission of the IB. It works to reinforce

narratives that are already present in the school, which focus on being a connected, caring,

compassionate community. There are regular mentions of 'student action' in

communications to the community, at staff meetings, at student assemblies, and in relation

to many fundraising events at the school. This solution should work to reinforce that there

is a deep commitment to shifting how students and teachers think about teaching and

learning to support meaningful student action.

Benefits and Drawbacks: These changes may signify a paradigm shift for many teachers. While it is likely that they feel aligned with the intention, it is likely that many teachers will feel like they are being pushed outside of their comfort zone. This is a deeper, more fundamental shift than is suggested by the other possible solutions. As such, it is likely a more difficult and time consuming endeavor. Training and professional development needs will draw on the resources of both time and money.

As many PYP schools struggle with this same issue, there is an opportunity presented by such a fundamental shift in curriculum and pedagogy. If this solution is embraced and pursued, the school could potentially position itself as a leader within the IB World School community in relation to promoting and supporting student action.

Required Resources: While time is the most obvious resource required, it is reasonable to assume that significant financial resources could eventually be required. While a new model of pedagogy would be developed collaboratively, it is likely that subsequent changes would require investment in further training and professional development for all members of staff.

Selected Solution

While the final solution presented is likely to consume more time, energy, and financial investment than the other options, it does appear to be the solution that is most likely to address the problem of practice at the most fundamental level. Not taking action runs the risk of placing the school in a negative position prior to the upcoming evaluation visit from the IB. Delegating to a professional learning community will lead to unpredictable results, and will not necessarily lead to the desired outcome. Clarifying expectations and implementing accountability measures could lead to an improvement in

documentation, but would be unlikely to actually improve how student action is supported

and promoted with the school. The final solution is the only one that addresses the

experiences that children have in the classroom and in the broader school community in

order to create the conditions in which children are more likely to engage in taking

meaningful action. This solution may also be able to incorporate improvements to

documentation, and the use of PLCs alongside changes to curriculum and pedagogy.

In the next section, leadership approaches to change that best support the proposed

solution will be explored in greater detail.

Leadership Approaches to Change

As presented earlier, the most accepted and widespread leadership approach at TIS is one

of distributed leadership. In order to successfully implement this organizational improvement

plan, it will not be necessary to completely shift away from current leadership approaches, but to

influence and adapt these approaches in light of transformative leadership theory and practice.

Distributed leadership can be explored from a variety of perspectives. Woods and

Roberts (2015) make a distinction between analytical and applied conceptualizations of

distributed leadership. The analytical conceptualization is that leadership is emergent and comes

about through complex and interactive processes rather than being the exclusive domain of those

in formal leadership positions. There are many opportunities too for those who are not in formal

positions of leadership to engage in leadership practices at TIS. This happens regularly through

involvement in PLCs, engagement in committees and task-forces, and through formal leaders

supporting teachers to take initiative and act autonomously to solve problems.

An applied conceptualization of distributed leadership was presented by Woods and

Roberts in an earlier publication in 2013 and identified that distributed leadership involves an

organizational culture that sees leadership as being contributed to from across the organization, and which recognizes that distributed leadership can be used to improve the effectiveness of the organization. They additionally suggested that distributed leadership is accompanied by an organization structure, which spreads the opportunities for the exercise of leadership beyond the formal leadership roles of the organization, so that various sources of knowledge, expertise, and perspectives can be incorporated into the organization's work and development. The structure also promotes collaborative working relationships and contributes to a flatter hierarchy within the organization. Currently, there are a number of such structures at TIS that support this distributed leadership approach. The three main structures that work in concert to support a distributed approach to leadership and decision making are: team leader meetings, staff meetings, and PLCs. Team meetings are held within each grade level and department. Each of these teams has a team leader who receives a stipend. The principal and assistant principals empower these team leaders to operate with a high level of autonomy and frequently delegate significant decision-making processes to them. These team leaders meet bi-weekly as a group and these meetings are attended by the principal, assistant principals, and the programme coordinator. All decisions impacting teaching and learning are brought to this meeting and discussed collaboratively.

Agenda items for upcoming meetings are discussed before the conclusion of each meeting so that all members have an opportunity to contribute to the agenda. This frequently is used as a forum for team leaders to discuss issues that members of their teams have raised. This avenue for impacting and influencing the items and issues discussed is an indicator of distributed leadership.

While staff meetings are sometimes used to simply share information and updates, there are regular opportunities to use this time in a manner more consistent with distributed leadership. One way this is done is by providing staff meeting time to share learning from PLCs or for committees and task-forces to use this time to collect input and feedback from staff, or to facilitate collaborative discussions around issues that are pertinent to members of the teaching staff.

Distributed leadership is also enacted through the structures currently in place to facilitate professional learning communities. These PLCs began at TIS in the spring of 2017 following a series of discussions around collective teacher efficacy which Bandura defines as "a group's shared belief in its conjoint capability to organize and execute the course of action required to produce given levels of attainment" (1997, p. 477). The impact of collective teacher efficacy on student learning is well established by Eells (2011) and Donohoo, Hattie, and Eells (2018). By focusing on collective teacher efficacy through PLCs, the school aligns with the idea that leadership, knowledge, and expertise is naturally distributed throughout an organization. The structures of these professional learning communities at TIS were built around the three 'big ideas' presented by DuFour (2004): a focus on learning, a culture of collaboration, and a focus on results. The establishment of these professional learning communities may be seen as well aligned with the distributed leadership approach evidenced throughout the organization.

Spillane, Halverson and Diamond suggested that to understand school leadership we need to look beyond structures when they wrote, "To study school leadership we must attend to leadership practice rather than chiefly or exclusively to school structures, programmes, and designs" (2001, p. 23). While the prevailing leadership approach within TIS is a distributed one, there are exceptions to how individual school leaders conduct themselves, and to what degree

faculty members feel they have a say in matters that impact them. In May of 2018, a survey was distributed to all faculty members of the school. The survey used the Gallup Q12 index, which is a set of 12 questions that relate to key organizational outcomes.

One of the questions asked TIS staff to rate on a 5-point scale the degree to which they believe that 'At work, my opinions seem to count'. The average response for all questions in the survey was 3.8. The responses to this particular question averaged 3.7. Around 60% of responses were favorable, while 31.2% of staff gave a neutral rating, and 8.2% of responses were unfavorable. While the responses were not particularly bad, they do demonstrate that nearly a third of faculty members do not feel that their opinions count at work (The International School, 2018). This outcome suggests that there is more work to be done in regards to sharing leadership and decision-making in a distributed manner at TIS.

In order for effective change to occur in relation to the problem of practice being addressed here, it will be necessary to leverage current distributed leadership practices while implementing elements of transformative leadership into the institutional structures and individual practices of school leaders and other stakeholders. In a similar vein, Brooks et. al. write:

> On a conceptual level, knowledge and understanding about the link among social justice theory, distributed leadership models, and practices can benefit aspiring and practicing school leaders because it connects the social mission of most schools to the practice of everyday leadership activity. (2007, p. 400)

This idea of connecting the social mission with everyday leadership activity is the opportunity for shifting current leadership practice to incorporate elements of transformative leadership. In order to implement elements of transformative leadership, it will be necessary to

provide ongoing explanations and rationale for the proposed changes that link the school vision and mission, and the mission of the IB to 'make the world a better place'. As a school leader, it will be important that I consistently reiterate that the purpose of changing practice to encourage more student action is to do our part as an organization to contribute to a more just and equitable world.

Carol Shields' definition of transformative leadership presented in the previous chapter focused on justice and democracy through the critique of inequitable practices, which links directly to the IB's mission to 'make the world a better place'. While distributed leadership is not necessarily democratic as it does not technically provide equal opportunity to all, it does provide "fertile ground for maintaining long-term commitments to the desired goals of equity" (Woods & Roberts, 2013, p. 8). Transformative leadership provides an answer to the question 'distributed to what end?' as it focuses on critiquing the status quo to address issues of justice and equity.

The next section of this chapter will briefly explore issues of ethics related to implementing the proposed changes through distributed and transformative approaches to leadership.

Leadership Ethics and Organizational Change

The education systems of a number of countries have been swept up in the movement towards centralization, standardization, and accountability (Sahlberg, 2016; Hargreaves & Shirley, 2012). This movement seems to coincide with the rise of the 'emergent approach' to organizational change, which Burnes (2009) describes as "focused on the use of power and politics to bring about change" (p. 359). Burnes goes on to suggest that modern organizations require a new approach to change, which is based upon individuals acting of their own volition in ethical and participative ways.

Using the blend of transformative and distributed leadership described in the first chapter matches this approach. While transformative leadership aims to transform organizations to be more just and equitable, distributed leadership involves collaboration, trust, and empowerment of a wide range of stakeholders within the organization.

Spillane et al. (2004) view leadership as emerging from the activities of the school, rather than from the activities of a singular leader. Murphy et al. (2009) echo this sentiment in stating that distributed leadership requires school leaders to reconsider the ways in which they enact their leadership. School leaders must see themselves more as a facilitator of the structures that allow for shared leadership to take place, rather than as a formal leader of others. This entails an ethical approach to leadership based on trust, and a belief in the collective efficacy of others within the organization.

Woods and Gronn (2009) draw important parallels between distributed leadership and democracy by pointing to the potential of distributed forms of leadership to incorporate the democratic elements of self-governance, protection from arbitrary power, and legitimacy grounded in consent. In order to harness the democratic potential of distributed leadership, it is important that I draw on these elements to guide my decision-making and approach to leading the change efforts. These democratic elements overlap to a relatively high degree with elements underpinning transformative leadership.

Acting as a transformative leader may involve pushing people out of their comfort zones as they are forced to confront issues of race, ethnicity, equality, justice, and subjugation. Stakeholders within the organization may not be comfortable confronting such issues as their own entitlement or privilege. In leading change as a transformative leader, it is important that I consider these possibilities and to act in a manner that is

consistent with the ideals of this leadership approach, which are inherently ethical in their own right. If I act in a way that does not seem just or equitable, it is likely that my credibility will suffer significantly as a result. It will thus be important that I model actions to others, show appreciation of those who take risks, listen to a broad range of perspectives, give encouragement, and be honest and transparent in my communication.

Another important consideration in terms of ethics is that "most school leadership practices create temporary, localized flurries of change but little lasting or widespread improvement (Hargreaves & Fink, 2004, p. 8). It is important that any change is implemented in a sustainable manner, so that it will become embedded in the culture of the school. This connects directly with Kotter's (2012) eighth step in his change model, which focuses on anchoring the change in the culture of the organization. Hargreaves and Fink (2004) suggest that leaders develop sustainability in their schools by committing to and protecting deep learning in their schools; by trying to ensure that improvements last over time, especially after they have gone; by distributing leadership and responsibility to others; by considering the impact of their leadership on the schools and communities around them; by sustaining themselves so that they can persist with their vision and avoid burning out; by promoting and perpetuating diverse approaches to reform rather than standardized prescriptions for teaching and learning; and by engaging actively with their environments. At TIS, there already exists a culture of organizational learning, which has manifested itself as a commitment to professional learning communities. Leadership and responsibility are already distributed throughout the organization as explored earlier in this chapter. It is important that the improvement plan leverages these two elements in order to ensure that changes become long-lasting and embedded.

It will also be important to ensure that there is a broad-based and inclusive coalition developed to drive the change forward, as "No one school leader can do the work alone, and even if he or she could, such work is not everlasting" (Stone-Johnson, 2014, p. 671). Stone-Johnson goes on to explain that, "Deep and lasting change requires many people to do the work. The web that a responsible leader weaves wraps multiple people into the ongoing process of change (p. 671). I must therefore see myself as one leader among an intricate network of many leaders who will work together to effect change at TIS.

It is also useful to consider ethical implications related to the publishing of the organizational improvement plan in the future. Since the OIP is likely to become a document available to the public, many of the ethical considerations that should be taken into account when conducting research should also be considered here. The American Psychological Association identifies a few main principles regarding research ethics. These include: open discussion of intellectual property, being conscious of multiple roles, following informed-consent rules, and respect for confidentiality (Smith, 2003). It is important for the author of this organizational improvement plan to consider confidentiality by anonymizing the people and locations in the OIP. It is also important to ensure that the planning, writing, and implementing of the organizational improvement plan does not interfere with other professional roles and obligations or create any conflicts of interest.

Given the moral and ethical orientation of the chosen approaches to leadership for this organizational improvement plant, it is absolutely essential that I act in an ethical manner. The considerations briefly examined above must be taken into careful consideration throughout the planning and implementation of the organizational

improvement plan to ensure that I am seen as an ethical and legitimate leader, and to generate and perpetuate a belief in the efficacy of the proposed changes amongst staff and other stakeholders.

Conclusion

This chapter explored the prevailing leadership style currently embedded into the structures and practices of the organization, while suggesting that implementing elements of transformative and distributed leadership into these current structures and practices will be necessary to effectively implement the organizational improvement plan. Kotter's eight-stage model was presented as a framework for leading the change process, before exploring a critical organizational analysis. Next, a series of possible solutions to the problem of practice were presented and evaluated, before one being presented as having the greatest efficacy. The chapter ended with a consideration of leadership ethics in the change process. The final chapter of this organizational improvement plan will focus on presenting a detailed plan for implementing, monitoring, and communicating the organizational change process.

Chapter 3

Implementation, Evaluation, & Communication

This final chapter focuses on the implementation, evaluation and communication of the improvement plan.

Introduction

The first chapter of this organizational improvement plan presented the problem of practice and the organizational context in which it is set. The initial chapter then presented a leadership-focused vision for change, along with an analysis of organizational change readiness. The second chapter presented leadership approaches to the change process and explained how Kotter's eight-stage model for change will guide the improvement plan. A number of possible solutions for change were explored alongside a consideration of the ethical implications related to leading the change process. This third and final chapter of the organizational improvement plan will focus on the presentation of a detailed plan for implementing change, followed by a description of processes, which will be used to monitor and evaluate change, as well as a plan for effectively communicating the need for change and the change process to stakeholders.

Change Implementation Plan

Before presenting the implementation plan in more depth, this OIP first presents the primary goals and priorities upon which the plan is based.

Primary Goals & Priorities:

The primary goal of this OIP is to increase the quality and quantity of student-initiated action in the primary school. In this context, action refers to intentional decisions made by children, in response to their learning, to take individual or collective action to make a positive

difference, and is seen as a medium through which to actualize the International Baccalaureate's mission to 'make the world a better place' (International Baccalaureate, 2014, p. vi).

In order to realize this goal, it is important that objectives are clearly articulated to guide decision-making. Well-constructed objectives provide valuable tools for improving the likelihood that such goals are achieved in an appropriate amount of time (McLeod, 2012). In order to ensure that objectives are clearly defined, SMART goal-setting, first articulated by Doran (1981), is used to further articulate the above goal in the paragraphs below.

Specific: Specific objectives to accomplish this goal will include three priorities. The first initiative is to develop approaches to teaching and learning that are informed by critical pedagogy. Farrow (2017) sees critical pedagogy as a synthesis of educational theory and critical theory in which pedagogy focuses on challenging the status quo and tackling issues of truth, power and justice. Ty (2011) outlines the fact that teaching and learning focusing on such issues acts as a provocation for students to take action.

The second initiative is to support and develop a shared understanding of a broader definition of 'action', which incorporates the IB's five categories of action: participation, advocacy, social justice, social entrepreneurship, and lifestyle choices (International Baccalaureate, 2017). It will be important that teachers are supported to collaboratively develop a clear definition of action that acknowledges the full range of forms that action may take. Broadening the understanding of what exactly action is should lead to an increase in reported instances of student action, as previously overlooked student initiatives become recognized as true forms of action.

The third initiative is to implement systems to model, identify, and celebrate instances of individual and collective action on both a classroom level and division level. Teachers, students,

and other stakeholders within the organization all have the power to model action-taking to one another. Every instance of action-taking provides an opportunity for examples to be made explicit and discussed with children. Celebrating actions regularly in an explicit manner also provides the opportunity to communicate to all stakeholders what is valued within the organization (Bolman & Deal, 2017).

Measurable: In terms of measuring change, it is important that there is an iterative cycle in which evidence of change towards the above goal is measured and analyzed as a reflective effort to inform further action. Currently, it is a required and accepted practice that teachers collaboratively reflect on planned teaching and learning experiences and record instances of student action in the school's curriculum mapping database. If this OIP is successful, there should be an increased quantity of action recorded on this database in comparison to the baseline data shared in the previous chapter. The 'quality' of student action will be measured using an adapted version of Hart's Ladder of Participation (Hart, 1992). Quality will be determined based on the level of student participation according to this adaptation of Hart's Ladder. A third indicator of success will be the next report from the IB following an upcoming evaluation visit in the winter of 2020-21. One of the standards they evaluate schools against relates directly to student action (International Baccalaureate, 2014).

Attainable: It remains to be seen if the collective efforts of the staff and other stakeholders will lead to a significant improvement in regards to the goal identified; it does seem that the goal is reasonable and worthwhile. As the goal was identified as part of a school evaluation by the IB, there is an expectation that the school will make significant progress before the next evaluation visit. The fact that this goal was identified by external, independent professionals is objective evidence that the goal is reasonable and realistic.

Results Oriented: There are three anticipated outcomes of this organizational

improvement plan:

- The school's curriculum mapping database will show an increased quantity in reported

  instances of student action.

- A review of the quality of these examples of action using an adapted version of Hart's

  Ladder of Participation (1992) will provide evidence of greater student participation in

  these instances of action.

- The IB evaluation report following their visit in winter 2020-21 will identify that

  significant progress has been made in regards to student action since their last visit, and

  therefore, will not make a recommendation that the school requires further work in this

  area.

Time-bound: The above goals should be accomplished by the time the next IB evaluation

visit takes place during the winter of 2020-21 (exact date yet to be determined). In order for

changes to become truly embedded into the culture of the organization, it will be important that

ongoing change and development continues after this point in time.

While this section articulated the intended outcomes of the change process, the next section

details how Kotter's eight-step process for change (Kotter, 2012) will be used to enact change

towards the desired goals.

The Change Plan

The change plan is organized below through Kotter's eight stanges. Although they are

presented sequentially, the stages overlap and take place concurrently at various times.

Stage 1 - Establishing a Sense of Urgency: It is important that change begins with a

clear rationale for the change that can be easily understood by all stakeholders impacted by the

change, as a clear rationale for change leads to greater internalization and acceptance of change (Deci et al., 1994). While significant levels of influence and control need to be handed over to others in order to lead in a distributed way, I have an important role to play in this initial stage of establishing a sense of urgency. It is important that I establish a clear rationale for the proposed changes and provide an inspiring vision of the future state we wish to achieve.

It is important that the rationale for change is communicated early and often (Kotter, 2012). In May 2019, the school will begin to prepare for a self-study as the first step in the school evaluation process set by the IB (International Baccalaureate, 2010). This provides an important opportunity for me to communicate to staff the action points from the previous evaluation report and identify areas for further growth, including the points relating to student action. I will communicate these in person during a staff meeting in early May 2019, and in a follow-up electronic communication alerting staff to the beginning of the process and the necessity of showing progress in relation to the action points from the previous evaluation cycle (International Baccalaureate, 2010).

It is also important at this initial stage of the change process that I align this process with other related initiatives in the school. The most important and relevant initiative is the review of the school's mission and vision. In my role as assistant principal, I will meet with the group focusing on the review of school mission and vision. I will share the intended outcomes of this change plan and discuss how it relates to the mission and vision of the school. Ewan McIntosh is scheduled to visit the school in the Autumn of 2019 to further assist with this review of mission and vision. I will remain closely involved with the mission and vision review process to ensure that the evolving school mission aligns with the IB's mission to 'make the world a better place' (International Baccalaureate, 2014, p. vi).

While there are no financial implications at this stage of the change process, it will be necessary to dedicate at least two of the weekly primary leadership meetings to developing a clear communication of the rationale for change, as well as at least two weekly staff meetings to developing shared understandings of the needed changes amongst staff. This initial stage involves mostly planning and communication and will directly involve only members of the primary leadership team, including the principal, two assistant principals, and curriculum coordinator. The school-wide director of teaching and learning, who also sits on the primary leadership team, will be tasked with writing the community newsletter. I will collaborate with the director of teaching and learning to ensure that elements related to student action are clearly communicated to the community. Communicating the need for change will need to take place prior to the end of June so that the next stage of the change plan can be put into motion in August.

Stage 2 - Creating a Guiding Coalition: A guiding coalition must be formed, which includes those with formal power, as well as informal leaders who have significant influence over other stakeholders in the organization (Kotter, 2012). Intentionally acknowledging and including informal leaders is consistent with a distributed leadership approach (Avolio, 2009) and with the principals of equity and inclusion underlying transformative leadership (Shields, 2010). At a minimum, the guiding coalition must include the primary principal, the assistant principals, and the primary curriculum coordinator. Additionally, it will be important that the guiding coalition includes a range of stakeholders from across the primary division so that it may be seen as broadly representative of the staff. Volunteers will be encouraged to participate, but those possessing significant informal influence will be explicitly invited to join. The guiding coalition will be referred to as a 'steering committee'.

The steering committee will include the author of this OIP and will be tasked with the following responsibilities:

- Keeping stakeholders informed through regular communication.

- Liaising with the professional learning community to ensure coherence.

- Plan the use of staff meetings and in-service days to support the development of teaching and learning practices to encourage student action.

- Develop and communicate a clear vision of the desired future state of the organization based on the recommendations from the IB and the content of this OIP.

- Establish a shared definition and understanding of the full range of forms that student action can take amongst all teaching faculty in the primary division.

- Develop a set of criteria with which to use to review the school's programme of inquiry, with the intent of ensuring that curricular content is significant, relevant, and meaningful enough to encourage student action.

- Develop a visual model to help clarify what effective teaching and learning for action looks like.

- Identify and promote professional development opportunities both within the school and externally.

The coalition should include members of the early years and the lower and upper primary. There should also be someone to represent the specialist teachers and teaching assistants (Kotter, 2012). There is potential for a great number of staff members to want to be involved, but it will be important to keep the size of the group under 12 if possible ("Is Your Team Too Big?," 2006), but also be as inclusive as possible.

Members of this steering committee who are in teaching roles will be asked to form a professional learning community (PLC), which is currently part of the professional development expectations for all staff members at TIS. In order to engender credibility and be directly involved in the PLC, the author of this OIP, who currently serves as the assistant principal, will partner with a few teachers to be directly involved in working with students in classrooms throughout the school year. PLCs have been running across the school since August 2017. August 2019 will mark the beginning of the third iteration of PLCs and TIS. If there are more than 12 volunteers to join the steering committee, some may be encouraged to join the PLC instead. There are currently three staff members, in addition to the curriculum coordinator and myself, who have expressed interest in being directly involved in this initiative. I will put out a call for further volunteers, and approach a few key people individually to invite them to join. Professional learning communities are viewed within the school as collaborative groups of educators who seek to critically analyze and share their practice in an ongoing and iterative manner to improve student learning (Stoll, Bolam, McMahon, Wallace & Thomas, 2006). This approach to engaging staff in enacting meaningful change is well aligned with the principals of this OIP as it involves distributed leadership (Hairon, Goh & Lin, 2014). Additionally, a PLC focused on student action complements the principles of transformative leadership, which Shields et al. (2018) describe as focused on equity, democracy, social justice, and meaningful change.

The most significant potential pitfall at this stage of the change process would be a lack of interest in the guiding coalition. While there is always some risk that interest in such an initiative is low, it seems likely that I will be able to attract 12 people to join the steering committee. Given that the curriculum coordinator and I will be members of this steering

committee, and that three others have already expressed interest in joining, it will only be necessary to attract another seven members. It would, of course, be possible to operate with a smaller group as well. With a staff of approximately 100 teachers, a group of 10 could still be considered adequately representative. There are a few key teachers I will approach directly and ask to join because they are seen as highly credible and well respected within the organization. Having them on the steering committee will bring further credibility to the entire process.

It will be helpful for the director of teaching and learning to be directly involved as well, but his time may be limited as he is working across all three divisions of the school and overseeing the entire evaluation and accreditation process. It will be important for the steering committee to liaise with him regularly. Currently, the director of teaching and learning holds bi-weekly curriculum meetings. This will provide an appropriate context for a member of the steering committee to keep the entire curriculum team, including the director of teaching and learning, well-informed.

While there are no immediate financial implications of forming a guiding coalition, it will be important that this group is provided with an adequate amount of time to meet. As I oversee all of the extra-curricular activities, I am in a position to ensure that one afternoon per week is kept free for all members of this steering committee to meet regularly throughout the year. This group will also be provided with time during the orientation week in August, and during the in-service days in October and February (a total of four days during the year). A call for expressions of interest will need to go out by early June with the group formed and ready to meet during the second week of August 2019.

Stage 3 - Developing a Vision and Strategy: The vision is a clear and desirable picture of the future (Senge, 2006). What this future state looks like must be communicated clearly to

staff (Kotter, 2012) and relate directly to the recommendations from the last evaluation report.

The steering committee will develop a tangible picture of what this will look like and why it

matters, relating directly to the mission and vision of both the school, and the International

Baccalaureate. The steering committee will additionally develop processes to work together with

the entire primary teaching faculty to develop a shared understanding (and definition) of what

action is and the various forms it can take. Time can be set aside to focus on this development of

shared understanding during regularly scheduled staff meetings on Wednesday afternoons. Based

on the input and feedback from staff, the steering committee will develop a model to make

visible to students, staff, and parents how all of the following elements fit together. I will provide

them with an example model that I have constructed that may be used as a starting point to work

from. This example model is shown in Figure 3.1. I will propose to the steering committee that

the following elements be included in the model:

- The IB's Choose-Act-Reflect action cycle (International Baccalaureate, 2009).

- Approaches to teaching and learning focusing on critical pedagogy (Christensen
  & Aldridge, 2013).

- The IB's five categories of action (participation, advocacy, social justice, social
  entrepreneurship, lifestyle choices) (International Baccalaureate, 2017).

- Encouraging action through identification of action, modelling action, and
  celebrating action both in classrooms and in the wider school community.

The model in Figure 3.1 provides a starting point for the development of this visual

model. The model will be adapted by the steering committee based on their emerging

understandings and feedback from other staff members. The model presents student involvement

in action as a ladder. Towards the top of the ladder, children are acting with greater autonomy or

agency. Choosing, acting, and reflecting are seen as an iterative process, which supports children to engage in higher levels of participation, moving them up the ladder. In order for the ladder to remain standing upright, it needs two supports. The first support is the floor, which represents the different forms of student action being modelled, identified, and celebrated through teaching and learning processes. The second support is the wall that the ladder leans against, representing curriculum and pedagogy, which is based on knowledge of others, critical pedagogy, and global citizenship. This model is only presented as one possible model and is in no way meant to be viewed as a complete and exhaustive presentation of how student action is best supported and developed in a school. The steering committee will need to make amendments and evolve this model to fit the context of the school and the emerging understandings of stakeholders within the school.
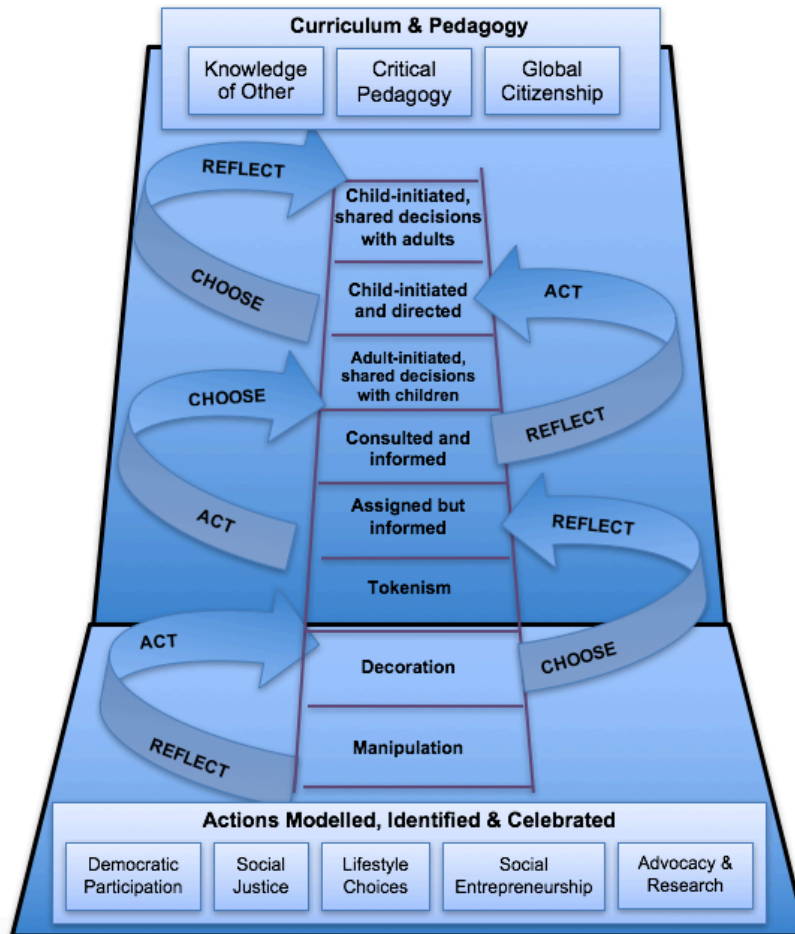
Figure 3.1 Example model to be provided to steering committee. Adapted from Hart (1992), International Baccalaureate (2009), and International Baccalaureate (2017).

The steering committee will also develop a set of criteria from which to review and analyze the school's programme of inquiry. PYP schools organize their curriculum around a set of six broad transdisciplinary themes rather than the traditional subject areas. These six transdisciplinary themes, repeated across each grade level, constitutes the school's programme of inquiry (International Baccalaureate, 2009). The purpose of this review will be to identify

opportunities to incorporate content that better supports student action (e.g. critical pedagogy,

engagement with significant issues, global citizenship education, etc.).

The steering committee will liaise with the PLC regularly and share their findings with

staff as part of their efforts to support teachers in developing skills, strategies, and dispositions

for supporting action in their classrooms. The PLC provides an excellent framework for this

because professional learning communities are expected to have an explicit focus on children's

learning, and to measure their own effectiveness on the basis of results (Lee & Lee, 2013). I will

have an important role to play in liaising between the steering committee and the action PLC to

ensure an ongoing cross-fertilization of thinking and ideas.

The steering committee will also be tasked with identifying and promoting professional

development opportunities for staff members to participate in. These opportunities will include a

range of external workshops and conferences, as well as bringing professionals in to work

directly with staff. TIS currently partners with a professional development provider, Chapters

International ("Home, Chapters International," n.d.), to host events featuring top presenters in

education. One of the speakers they work with regularly is Cathy Berger Kaye ("CBK

Associates," n.d.) who focuses specifically on supporting service learning in schools. The

coalition may explore the possibility of bringing in Cathy Berger Kaye, or other speakers

through Chapters International. Hosting such an event also attracts other educators from around

Europe to come to TIS who are interested in issues relating to student action. This provides

further opportunity to learn from other educators in other professional contexts (Fullan, 2007).

In order to promote professional development aligned with the goals of this OIP, the

school will offer subsidies to encourage staff to use their personal PD allowances to take online

courses or attend workshops relating to critical pedagogy, student action, service learning, or

other related topics (e.g. online courses from the Friere Institute, workshops from the Literacy

Trust, etc.) The school will subsidize 50% of the cost of attending a workshop up to $1,000 limit

if the respective staff member can clearly identify how a course or workshop aligns with the

goals of this OIP. Current budget allocations provide staff members with a personal allowance of

$1,000 per year, which may be accumulated up to a maximum of $4,000. There is an additional

budget of $50,000 available to the primary leadership to fund additional professional

development, which is made available for use at the discretion of the primary leadership team of

which I am a part. Approximately, half of this amount will need to be set aside. This will provide

funding for a minimum of 25 teachers to attend subsidized professional development.

Workshops hosted on the TIS campus through our partnership with Chapters International are

provided to TIS staff at a reduced rate of $600. To attend such a workshop would only require

the staff member to dedicate $300 of their personal allowance, which would then be matched

through the subsidy. For this reason, the $25,000 allocated for subsidizing professional

development seems plentiful and does not represent any increase in current budgets provided for

professional development.

        These actions and strategies must be implemented over an extended period of time. It is

likely that initial actions will lead to an immediate increase in action within the school. It will be

important that pressure is sustained over the long-term in order to ensure that these initial results

translate into a more significant change within the community. Staff meeting times must be

planned very carefully to ensure that staff do not feel that time is being wasted. They must be

planned with great intention and the purpose for each session must be communicated clearly to

those in attendance. It will be important to consistently relate back to the recommendations of the

previous evaluation, as well as the mission and vision of both the IB and the school, in order to maintain a sense of need for ongoing change over a longer time period (Kotter, 2012).

Workshops on in-service days and external PD are both optional for staff. They are expected to participate in the workshops, but have a range to choose from. In order to ensure ongoing discourse around student action throughout the primary school, it will be important to be strategic in encouraging participation among a range of stakeholders throughout the division. Time is the most significant resource required. It will be important to use time that is already set aside to focus on the PYP enhancements as well as the self-study and school evaluation and accreditation preparation as much as possible so that staff do not see these initiatives as adding to an already busy and demanding schedule.

Most of these strategies and approaches will need to be implemented throughout the 2019-2020 school year. A shared vision should be shared by the end of September 2019, with a definition and shared understanding of student action to be developed collaborative by the end of October 2019. The development of the visual framework will need to be completed by May 2020, and the review of the programme of inquiry to take place in January and February 2020. The PLC will begin from August 2019 and continue indefinitely. Subsidies of professional development focused on student action will be offered throughout the 2019-2020 school year, and will be reviewed by the primary leadership team in June 2020 to determine if the subsidies will continue into the next school year or be discontinued. I am one of the three people, along with the principal and other assistant principal, who collaboratively decide on how to allocate professional development funds within the primary division. If we agree that continuing the subsidies for an additional year is appropriate, we may allocate the funds as we see fit. If it is decided that budgets must be expanded from current levels, the principal needs to make a

proposal for increased funding, which is reviewed and approved or denied by the senior leadership team. At this point in time, it is not anticipated that current budgets will need to be expanded in order to enact this change plan.

Stage 4 - Communicating the Change Vision: The desired future state is a relatively simple one to understand. Care must be taken, however, to link it to vision and mission to ensure that stakeholders see the efficacy in dedicating this amount of time and resources to the issue. Communication must be simple and easy to understand (Klein, 1996) and communication must come through multiple mediums and be repeated multiple times (Kotter, 2012). All stakeholders must have an opportunity to engage in dialogue about the changes to construct understanding of the importance, and rationale behind the change (Armenikas & Harris, 2001).

Currently at TIS, channels of communication are well established. These channels include in-person verbal communication at staff meetings (weekly), team planning meetings (twice weekly), team leader meetings (bi-weekly), whole-school addresses at beginning and end of year, as well as during in-service days (four days annually in October and February). Additionally, the established mediums for written communication are weekly email bulletins, and monthly school newsletters. Updates must be communicated as often as possible through as many of these mediums as possible and the updates must consistently be contextualized in terms of the overall vision.

Time and space in meetings and in publications must be sought out and secured early in the change process. The steering committee and the primary leadership team will take responsibility for communicating the changes and relating them to the overall vision. Communication must begin in May 2019 and continue at least until the evaluation visit in winter 2020-21. Further details regarding the communication plan will be explained in a section below.

Stage 5 - Empowering Employees for Broad Based Action: There must be a focus on reducing barriers for staff to enact changes and empowering them to take initiative. Formal structures must be reviewed to ensure they are not acting as barriers. Two tangible examples of this are the current policies and procedures for conducting fundraising, and the processes involved with documenting children's learning on the school's curriculum database. These are examples of policies and procedures that I am able to delegate to the steering committee or PLC to re-examine and possibly revise.

Adapting the reporting structure on the curriculum database is somewhat limited because the IB provides a structure that they expect schools to follow. If this is a barrier, then the curriculum coordinator could be tasked with facilitating discussions that involve reflection on action, and take responsibility for noting down the verbal reflections, and later entering them into the database. In this way, the flow of a reflective discussion may be better maintained.

It will be important that all members of the primary leadership team are supportive of staff and allow more risk-taking. It is important that this is not just verbalized, but it is also followed through on. Mistakes must be seen as an integral part of the learning process for both students and teachers.

A potential lack of knowledge and skills amongst staff to confidently support and promote action amongst their students will be addressed through the provision of professional development, some of which will be optional, and some mandatory. Mandatory professional development will be led by members of the steering committee and members of the PLC during staff meeting times. Staff must be encouraged to support students when they express a desire to take action that they need permission for or adult assistance to execute. Teaching staff must feel encouraged to do so. This can be accomplished through celebrating examples of action during

weekly school assemblies, during staff meetings, in the weekly bulletin, or in the school newsletter. As these mediums are all within the remit of my role at the school, I am well positioned to encourage and celebrate action in tangible ways.

The ongoing work of the PLC will help to ensure that staff feel empowered to test out new approaches. Teaching staff are often asked to put proposals in writing for approval by members of the leadership team, particularly the principal. It will be important that I communicate to teachers that they have the autonomy to support children with their initiatives to take action. I will need to do this explicitly in team meetings, team leader meetings, staff meetings, in email communications, in informal discussions, and through the celebrations of action mentioned earlier.

Stage 6 - Generating Short-Term Wins: Momentum must be sustained by celebrating examples of teachers implementing new ideas in their classrooms or students taking action. These will be celebrated in the weekly assemblies and teachers will be invited to share their successes at staff meetings so that their good work can be acknowledged, and others can learn from their experiences. There is a weekly bulletin that is sent out every Friday via email to staff. This is another avenue where successes can be acknowledged and celebrated. Personal letters to individual teachers, or to students, or whole classes will also be written by the principal or assistant principals to celebrate successes and reinforce positive steps to promote action. The student newspaper will also be asked to highlight examples of student action by individuals or groups. School leaders must take the time to recognize these achievements, no matter how small. It will be important to celebrate a wide array of action so that the community can deepen their understanding of the wide variety of forms that action can take.

Identifying actions will require the collective effort of staff. The curriculum coordinator will be given responsibility for oversight of identifying and documenting actions on the curriculum mapping database, while I personally will take responsibility for collecting, curating, and sharing tangible examples of action throughout the school community.

Stage 7 - Consolidating Gains and Producing More Change: By the spring of 2021, the accreditation and evaluation process will be complete and the school will have received a report from the IB and other accrediting bodies. If this improvement plan is successful, the IB will no longer identify student action as an area of recommended growth and development. The report should acknowledge the progress that has been made and encourage continuing the work that was started. This evaluation report will send a strong message to staff about the successes they have experienced so far, and the value in continuing their efforts.

It is important to include acknowledgement of this change in our year-end communication to the community in our 'Community Report' publication and to also acknowledge the work of the steering committee during the whole-staff gathering at the end of the school year. There is always the risk that the evaluation will find that there is still significant room for improvement in regard to supporting student action. If this were the case, staff could feel very demotivated and it may become more difficult to sustain change efforts going forward.

It will be important to communicate clearly the importance to the primary division of having these successes highlighted at the end of year. There is a risk that, because of competing priorities in other divisions, these changes get marginalized in end-of-year communication.

Stage 8 - Anchoring New Approaches in the Culture: The school's updated mission and vision must be published widely and be visible to all on a regular basis. Framed copies can be provided to classrooms and posted prominently in high-traffic areas such as the front office,

lunch room, library, and main corridors. It will be included in staff templates for presentation slides and printed on the inside cover of all print publications. It must become known to all in the community. The responsibility for branding currently sits with the school's community relations department. They will be tasked with updating school publications, logos, and templates accordingly.

The element of the updated mission and vision relating to student action must become part of the ongoing discourse of the community as it continues to be a central tenant of all IB programmes and is placed at the forefront of the new PYP enhancements (International Baccalaureate, 2017)

Action is an integral part of the updated standards and practices that IB schools will be evaluated against in the future, so there is an opportunity for the school to become a leader within the European international school community by reaching out to build partnerships with other schools and sharing experiences related to supporting student action.

Currently, the process for reviewing the mission and vision of the school is led by the head of school. There is a risk that elements related to 'making the world a better place' get discarded or marginalized during the review. The risk seems minimal due to the fact that the absence of this element was central to the decision to review the mission and vision in the first place. The IB also makes it a clear expectation that there is alignment between their mission and the mission statements of schools, as this requirement is stated explicitly in the IB's standards and practices document (International Baccalaureate, 2014).

In order to network with other schools, individuals need to put the time and effort into doing so. The school is already a member of several organizations that facilitate such exchanges. Partnering with other schools to share practice falls within the remit of the curriculum

coordinator, but this could be delegated to other staff members if anyone is interested in leading such an initiative.

There will be expenses related to the publication and framing of the school mission and vision. The community relations department will design the displays and the site staff will take responsibility for replacing existing displays in classrooms, offices, and corridors. In order to have a display in every classroom, and another 12 throughout the school in high-traffic areas, the approximate cost would be $2,100, based on the average cost of framing and mounting of $50 per frame. The electronic displays currently in place in three locations throughout the campus can also display the mission and vision as one of the items that are regularly scrolled through.

Critical Analysis of Change Plan

This change plan addresses a need that has been identified by the staff in a self-study and validated by an external visiting team as part of a school evaluation and accreditation process. Questions of validity and efficacy of the planned change are likely to be minimal compared to changes that have a much less obvious provocation. The desired outcome is clear and should be easy for stakeholders to understand and envision. The proposed change is aligned with the mission and vision of the International Baccalaureate and there is significant reason to believe that the current review of the TIS vision and mission will also bring these guiding statements into alignment with the change.

Kotter's 8-stage model of change (Kotter, 2012) is clearly laid out and easy to understand. It provides a framework to guide the implementation process over the course of the next two years and beyond. The later stages of the model work to embed the changes in such a way that they become part of the organizational culture, and thus, sustainable over time.

There is an underlying assumption within the change plan that the steps of the plan will unfold in a linear fashion. It is highly likely that the steps will overlap in timing and may even need to be revisited at later points depending on progress made. While it is fine to plan based on the assumption that the process will develop as anticipated, it will be important to be flexible and responsive by revisiting steps and implementing new changes and approaches as the need arises. Critics of Kotter's model suggest that change rarely unfolds in as linear a fashion as Kotter's model suggests (Appelbaum et al., 2012. This will depend on iterative cycles of reflection and analysis on the relative success of implementing each stage of the plan. The inherent assumption here is that tools for monitoring and evaluation will help identify when it is necessary to revisit particular stages of the model, and for what reasons. Plans for monitoring and evaluation will be explored further in the next section.

There is also an assumption that the proposed changes will not be met with significant resistance because of the alignment with current beliefs, associated with the philosophy espoused by the IB, and because of the recommendations that were made explicit to the entire community following the last cycle of evaluation and accreditation.

It is also assumed that the review of the school's mission and vision that is currently underway will result in greater alignment with the IB's mission statement and include an element directly related to taking action to 'make the world a better place'. While the author of this OIP has input into the review process, the final results depend on a collaborative decision by school leaders and other stakeholders.

The greatest risk is that the changes proposed by this change plan will be viewed as esoteric, rather than pragmatic and realistic. It is important that teachers see these changes as supporting and deepening the work they do with children, rather than an additional set of

considerations or requirements they must take into account or adhere to. To mitigate against this risk, it is important that I continually communicate and reiterate the purpose of these changes in a simple, yet meaningful way.

Limitations of the Change Plan

The path to achieving the desired changes is somewhat nebulous in nature. While desiring a distributed and collaborative approach to affecting changes in pedagogy and curriculum, such an approach naturally leads to less control of the process by school leaders. This may mean that the outcomes may be less predictable. School leaders must accept that unanticipated consequences may emerge from this process. As such consequences emerge it will be important to revise and update the implementation plan accordingly. The last few stages of the plan are less detailed than the earlier stages. It will be important to further clarify the components of the later stages as changes start to emerge and take shape.

When further refining this plan, it will be necessary to consider how pedagogical practices related to critical pedagogy can be embedded within the current written curriculum and teaching practices of teachers. It is important that it does not become an 'add on' that teachers need to make further room for in the school day.

There is also a risk that the changes identified in this implementation plan end up competing with other priorities related to the upcoming school evaluation. While better supporting student action was one of the main recommendations emerging from the school's last evaluation, there were a few other points identified as well. This plan does not currently identify strategies for ensuring that these changes remain a priority over others as the school starts to plan for the next self-study and

evaluation visit. It will be important that I continually think ahead and reassess priorities over the longer term to ensure sustainability of the proposed changes.

To ensure that the school's review of mission and vision results in greater alignment with the changes this plan aims to implement, it will be important that I take an active role in the meetings and discussions related to mission and vision. It will be important to point out to other key stakeholders involved in this process the requirement that the IB has for school mission statements to align with the IB mission statement and bring to their attention the elements relating to student action.

It will also be important that the author of this OIP, as well as the steering committee, take an active role in promoting the importance of this change to other stakeholders. It must be made explicit that these changes work to support the learning of children, align with teachers' beliefs, and support a coherent and inspiring vision for the future. If this is communicated early and often, then the chance of these changes remaining a priority over other initiatives remains high.

In order for the plan to remain relevant, attainable, and coherent, it is important that the plan changes as the context changes and new realities emerge. This will be done by engaging in a systematic process of monitoring and evaluation that informs revisions to the plan on an ongoing basis. This process will be explored further in the next section.

Change Process Monitoring and Evaluation

This section will present a rationale for monitoring and evaluation of the change process before exploring the priorities for monitoring and evaluation as well as the tools and strategies that will be used.

Purpose of Monitoring and Evaluating Change

The purpose of monitoring and evaluating change is to ensure that progress is being made towards the change objective (UNICEF, 1990). Monitoring and evaluation provide the opportunity to reflect on the effectiveness of actions up to a certain point in time and to then amend future actions accordingly (United Nations Development Programme, 2009) to ensure that time, energy, and other resources aimed at change are being employed with the greatest possible efficacy. When monitoring and evaluating change, what gets measured matters because what gets measured affects the direction, content, and outcomes of a change initiative (Cawsey, Deszca, Ingols & Cawsey, 2016).

Furthermore, a primary leadership competency associated with effectively implementing change relates to ensuring that effective processes for monitoring and review are in place (Higgs & Rowland, 2005). The PDSA cycle, which will be further explored below, supports iterative cycles of learning and refinement during a change process (Christoff, 2018) and provides the opportunity for a range of stakeholders to give input into, and reflect upon, the change process, which can help lower resistance to change (Schweiger, Stouten & Bleijenbergh, 2018). Ultimately, monitoring and evaluation must provide a measure of how successful change efforts have been up to a specific point, and allow for amendments and refinements of the plan to be made so that future iterations of the change plan are more effective.

Priorities for Monitoring and Evaluating Change

Monitoring and evaluation must take place at regular intervals during the change process. If monitoring and evaluation take place too infrequently, it will not be possible to make effective refinements to the change plan based on data and reflections gathered. Monitoring must be regular, ongoing, iterative in nature, and collaborative. Involvement of a range of stakeholders is consistent with a distributed leadership approach (Spillane, Halverson & Diamond, 2001). It is also important that evaluations focus on the overall goals of the change plan. In other words, any evaluation must measure what it is intended to measure. The next section will present the tools and strategies to be used to ensure that monitoring and evaluation measures what is intended.

Tools and Strategies for Monitoring and Evaluating Change

Monitoring and evaluation will be framed up using the Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) Cycle, which was popularized by W. Edwards Deming (MacLeod, Swart, & Paul, 2019). The PDSA model supports collaboration and involvement that is consistent with the principles of distributed leadership and directly relates to two other areas of leadership competency that Higgs and Rowland (2005) associate with leading successful change. These two areas of competency relate to engaging others in recognizing the need for change, and engaging others in the change process in order to build commitment.

The PDSA Cycle is meant to be iterative; the evaluations made from one cycle should inform the planning for the next cycle (Taylor et al., 2013). The use of an iterative cycle such as this assumes that plans are malleable and will change over time as more information and understanding of the dynamics of a given change are developed. It is for this reason that leadership of OIP must remain open and responsive to change. This also allows for the input of stakeholders to be taken into consideration and works to build trust and commitment amongst stakeholders as they see their input having a direct impact on the nature and direction of change.

The first step is to develop a change plan with clearly articulated outcomes. The second step is to implement the planned changes. Information and results are gathered, which are then studied as part of the third phase before new actions (or amendments of the change plan) are decided upon and put into action (Christoff, 2018).

While the 'Plan' and 'Do' stages are outlined in the previous section describing the change plan, it is important to consider the 'Study' and 'Act' phases of the cycle and to determine who will be involved, when they will take place, and how they will be implemented. The data to be studied will need to be a mixture of qualitative and quantitative. The qualitative data will take the form of collaborative reflections guided by a set of broad questions focused on determining if the changes are having a direct impact on the quantity and quality of student action in the primary school. These reflections will be considered alongside data collected through surveys of staff, students, and teachers, as well as the documented reflections of the PLC group. Additionally, the curriculum database will be reviewed regularly and a basic analysis of the quantity and quality of student action will be completed to evidence changes over time in relation to the baseline data shared in Chapter 2. A synthesis of the data collected from these sources will be shared with staff on a regular basis throughout the course of the 2019-2020 academic year.

The guiding questions to be used to focus reflective discussions by the steering committee will include the following:

- What tangible changes or initiatives have taken place over the past six weeks related to the promotion of student action throughout the primary school?

- What, if any, tangible examples of student action can you share from the past six weeks?

- What factors do you feel have contributed to these instances of action taking place?

- What barriers can you identify that may have prevented students from taking action?

- Do you feel that the initiatives that have been put in place have had a direct impact on

  student action? Why or why not?

These reflective discussions will take place approximately every six weeks because the

curriculum is organized around six transdisciplinary units of inquiry, which each take

approximately six weeks to complete. While it will take some time for the PLC group to set

priorities and start working with students, they should be able to begin regular reflections on

their work by week 13 of the school year. Collaborative, reflective discussion on the impact of

teaching practice is a fundamental part of PLCs (DuFour, 2004). Regular reflection by PLC

groups is already an embedded practice within the school. Surveys of students, staff, and parents

(see Appendix B) will take place thrice yearly, while the analysis of data on the curriculum

database will take place approximately every six weeks from week 13 onwards. I will take the

lead to collect data from all sources and share a synthesis of findings back to all staff three times

during the year. This sharing will be done both verbally, via staff meetings, and in writing, via

the weekly bulletin. All data will be collected and compiled in raw form and shared in a Google

Drive folder open to all staff members in order to communicate openness and transparency.

Table 3.1

Timeline for data collection for monitoring and evaluation

DATE	Reflection by steering committee	Reflection by PLC Group	Surveys of student, staff, and parents	Analysis of curriculum data	Synthesis of data shared back with staff
Late Sept. 2019	√				
Early Nov. 2019	√	√	√	√	√

Mid- Jan. 2020	√	√		√	
Early Mar. 2020	√	√	√	√	√
Early May 2020	√	√		√	
Mid-June 2020	√	√	√	√	√

Table 3.1 shows the timeline for collection of data for the purpose of monitoring and

evaluation. This timeline will guide my work in collecting and synthesizing data from various

sources in order to share back findings to staff. It will be the responsibility of the steering

committee, with my active involvement, to evaluate the data to determine amendments or

additions to the change plan as the change process moves forward. The timeline and processes

for this communication are shared in the next section.

Plan to Communicate the Need for Change and the Change Process

This organizational improvement plan will be led through a blend of distributed and

transformative leadership. It is important that this blend of leadership styles remains consistent

and guides all facets of the change process, including plans to communicate the need for change,

and plans to communicate with stakeholders throughout the change process.

Distributed leadership views leadership as being contributed to from across the

organization. It is accompanied by an organizational structure that spreads the exercise of

leadership beyond the formal leadership roles of the organization so that various sources of

knowledge, expertise, and perspectives can be incorporated into the organization's work and

development (Woods & Roberts, 2013). It is important that a range of actors have the

opportunity to participate in constructing and communicating with stakeholders regarding

change. I will take an active role as a participant in the steering committee and the PLC, but will

be intentional in incorporating and honoring the voices of all contributors.

Shields (2010) describes transformative leadership as beginning with "questions of

justice and democracy; it critiques inequitable practice and offers the promise not only of greater

individual achievement but of a better life lived in common with others" (p. 559). The key values

of transformative leadership are: liberation, democracy, equity, and justice. It is as important that

communication is led by these values of democracy, equity, and justice as any other facet of this

change plan. In clear alignment with the principles of transformative leadership is the suggestion

that effective communication and perception of justice are crucial factors to reducing change

resistance (Saruhan, 2014).

It is essential that the need for change is communicated clearly from the outset and that

this rationale is reiterated regularly. Negative responses to change can be caused by leaders not

placing enough importance on the need to communicate a consistent message (Armenikas &

Harris, 2002). Without a great quantity of credible communication, the hearts and minds of

stakeholders will never be captured (Kotter, 2012). While I maintain a commitment to

distributing leadership and honoring the voices of all participants, I can focus my efforts on

refining the quality of communication and ensuring that it is delivered frequently through a

variety of mediums. In order to limit resistance to change and to establish and maintain a high

level of commitment to the change, it is important that I communicate early and often.

It is very clear that difficulties associated with change can be reduced when there is

strategic thinking about how and when to communicate (Klein, 1996). The communication plan

that follows attempts to ensure that such strategic thinking is in place. Kotter's elements of

effective communication will be used to guide all communication. These elements include:

keeping it simple by avoiding the use of jargon; using metaphor, analogy and examples

whenever possible; use of multiple mediums for communicating; communicating frequently and

using repetition; leading by example; explaining inconsistencies between words and deeds, and

placing an emphasis on two-way communication over one-way communication (Kotter, 2012).

These elements are incorporated into the communication plan presented in the next section.

Change Communication Plan:

Communicating with stakeholders in a strategic and intentional way about the proposed

changes is essential to the success of this OIP. For this reason, it is important to establish a plan

for communication ahead of time. The plan and timeline for communication can be found below

in Appendix C.

This communication plan provides a credible and realistic approach to communicating

early and often with all stakeholders about the change process. It takes into account the

distributed nature of leadership by drawing on input and feedback from a wide array of

stakeholders and provides the opportunity to honor the work and leadership of others. The plan

incorporates multiple mediums of communication and assumes the importance of frequent

communication and feedback loops, which are consistent with the PDSA model presented

earlier. In approaching the proposed changes from a distributed leadership perspective, it is

necessary for me to hand over a significant amount of control and trust in the collective expertise

of the many stakeholders contributing to the process. While this leads to some ambiguity around

the particular details of the practices to be implemented, it is certain that I have an important

central role to play in regards to communicating both the need for change in order to establish

the initial sense of urgency, as well as communicating regularly with staff to ensure that

momentum towards change is perpetuated and changes become sustainable over time.

Conclusion

The final section of this chapter will briefly explore the next steps and future considerations as a conclusion to this organizational improvement plan.

Next Steps and Future Considerations

Organizational, and by extension, societal transformation towards a more just and equitable future is possible. Nowhere is it more important to emphasize the importance of taking meaningful action to 'make the world a better place' than in institutions in which we educate the young. Like most meaningful change, this one poses significant challenge, but also meaningful opportunity. Increasing the quality and quantity of student action in the primary division of the school not only responds to an explicit recommendation from one of the school's accrediting bodies, but also provides the potential to set the school on a course towards greater actualization of its stated mission and vision. Children who are empowered to take informed and responsible action are perhaps our greatest hope for creating a more equitable and just world.

The collective work of the many stakeholders who will be involved in this change process will ultimately determine how successful the change process is. Asking teachers and other stakeholders to become more critical of the world in which they live, and to challenge the status quo that has provided many of them with a very comfortable life is no small task. The forces of ethnocentrism and cultural hegemony may be strong within a group that has been, for the most part, members of the dominant social class.

This improvement plan provides a blueprint for bringing many stakeholders together to work towards an egalitarian goal that will not only benefit the individual families the school serves, but also the local and global community in which the school is situated. The greatest

challenge will be sustaining and extending the progress made beyond the 18 months that this plan encompasses. New staff will undoubtedly come into the school, families will depart, and new families will arrive, school leaders will change, and the strategic priorities of the school will be revisited and revised. As the evaluation visit comes and goes and the report from the IB is received by the community, it will be important to continually revisit priorities for ongoing change and development and to reposition and reassert the aims of this organizational improvement plan. As the author of this organizational improvement plan, I have a key role to play in sustaining efforts over the long term. I need to be a strong voice that reorients the collective conscience of the community towards the higher aspirations of our school and the potential impact it has on broader society.

Following the evaluation report, it will be necessary for the school to revise its action plan and consider priorities for the next five year cycle. This will be an important opportunity for me to work towards further embedding both philosophical beliefs and practical efforts related to student action into the long-term school development plans. Ongoing professional development, recruitment practices, and new staff orientation practices will all be important considerations moving forward from this point. It will also be important to consider how to build partnerships with parents, and with the broader community in order to share the beliefs and values of the school, but also to identify new opportunities outside the physical limits of the school campus.

This organizational improvement plan marks an important first step toward developing a more engaged and empowered school community. This step draws us toward a future in which students, teachers, staff, and parents are all aware of the power they have to make positive change in the world and see taking action in response to learning as an integral piece of a holistic learning experience that benefits not only the individual child, but society at large.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Hart's (1992) Ladder of Participation

Hart's (1992) Ladder of Participation was first presented in his work Children's

Participation; From Tokenism to Citizenship which he wrote for UNICEF. The rungs of Hart's

ladder represent increasing levels of children's participation and involvement in decision-making

which affect their lives and the lives of their communities. In his essay, Hart views participation

as a fundamental right of citizenship. An overview of the rungs of Hart's ladder are shown

below:

8. Child-initiated, shared decisions with adults	Degrees of participation
7. Child-initiated and directed	
6. Adult-initiated, shared decisions with children	
5. Consulted and informed	
4. Assigned and informed	
3. Tokenism	Non-participation
2. Decoration	
1. Manipulation	

Appendix B: Student, Staff, and Parent Survey Questions

Student Survey

(Responses will be collected and recorded by teachers based on group discussions with students

in grades up to, and including, grade 2. Students in grades 3-5 will be asked to complete the

surveys independently, via a Google Form, with teachers setting aside class time to do so.)

- Related to the unit of inquiry we have just completed, did you take any action to make
  yourself, your community, or the world better? If so, please describe any action you took.

- If you did not take any action, do you feel that there was anything preventing you from
  doing so?

- Do you know of any actions that your friends or classmates took? Please describe.

Staff Survey

- Are you aware of any examples of students taking action to make themselves, their
  community, or the world better? Describe any student action you are aware of.

- If your students did not take any action, do you feel that there was anything preventing
  them from doing so?

- What actions might you imagine students being able to take related to the last two units
  of inquiry your class engaged with?

- Did you take advantage of any opportunities to model action to your students in the past
  12 weeks?

- Did you take advantage of any opportunities to celebrate examples of student action in
  your classroom in the past 12 weeks?

Parent Survey

- Are you aware of the focus of the recent units of inquiry your child has been engaging with at school?

- Do you feel your child has the ability and desire to take action to address any of the issues or topics they have been exploring in class recently?

- Are you aware of any actions your child has taken over the past 12 weeks that may make themselves, their community, or the world better? If so, please describe the actions.

- If your child did not take any action based on their learning, do you feel that there was anything preventing them from doing so?

- Did you take advantage of any opportunities to celebrate examples of student action in your classroom in the past six weeks?

Appendix C: Change communication plan timeline

Timing	Communicator	Audience	Purpose	Medium
May 2019	Assistant Principal	Senior Leadership Team (SLT): Directors, Principals, Board Members	To share outline of OIP	In-Person Presentation
May 2019	Assistant Principal	Instructional Leadership Team: (Director of Curriculum, Curriculum coordinators, Assistant Principals	To share outline of OIP	In-Person Presentation
June 2019	Assistant Principal	Primary Teaching Faculty	Introduction of change plan aligned with plans for self-study for upcoming evaluation visit	In-Person Presentation
Late June 2019	Assistant Principal	Primary Teaching Faculty	Call for expression of interest in joining a steering committee focused on this OIP	Email and weekly Bulletin
August 2019	Director (School Head) and/or Director of Teaching and Learning (with input from assistant principal)	Whole school including teaching faculty and support staff	To share purpose of, and approach to the evaluation process, as well as areas to address, including elements of this OIP	Beginning-of-Year Whole-School Address
August 2019	Assistant Principal	Senior Leadership Team (SLT): Directors, Principals, Board Members	Update on progress of change plan	In-Person update as rolling agenda item

September 2019	Article written by Director of Teaching and Learning	All members of the school community	Explanation of the upcoming self-study and areas of focus including the focus on student action.	School Newsletter (Published online and distributed by email)
September 2019 (and weekly thereafter)	Assistant Principal and student volunteers	Students and teachers (some parents also present)	Showcasing student action at assemblies on weekly basis	In-Person presentation (weekly)
September 2019	Assistant Principal	Instructional Leadership Team: (Director of Curriculum, Curriculum coordinators, Assistant Principals)	Update on progress of change plan	In-Person update as rolling agenda item
September 2019	Steering Committee Communications Officer(s)	Primary Teaching Faculty	Update on ongoing developments (Allowing for Q&A time)	Weekly Bulletin (monthly) and staff meetings (monthly
October 2019	Assistant Principal and/or Steering Committee Communications Officer(s)	Principal's Advisory Council (Parent Group)	Regular (quarterly) update on progress relating to self-study and evaluation (including Q&A time)	In-Person presentation and discussion
October 2019	Assistant Principal	Senior Leadership Team (SLT): Directors, Principals, Board Members	Update on progress of change plan	In-Person update as rolling agenda item

October 2019	Steering Committee Communications Officer(s)	Primary Teaching Faculty	Update on ongoing developments (Allowing for Q&A time)	Weekly Bulletin (monthly) and staff meetings (monthly)
October 2019	Steering Committee Communications Officer(s) With support from PLC members	Primary Teaching Faculty	Staff to share examples of good practice and successes in supporting and promoting student action in their classrooms.	A group on the school's virtual learning environment (VLE)
November 2019	Assistant Principal	Primary Teaching Faculty	To share Synthesis of data collected on progress as part of PDSA Cycle	In-Person at staff meeting and electronically via Weekly Bulletin
November 2019	Assistant Principal	Instructional Leadership Team: (Director of Curriculum, Curriculum coordinators, Assistant Principals	Update on progress of change plan	In-Person update as rolling agenda item
November 2019	Steering Committee Communications Officer(s)	Primary Teaching Faculty	Update on ongoing developments (Allowing for Q&A time)	Weekly Bulletin (monthly) and staff meetings (monthly)
December 2019	Assistant Principal	Senior Leadership Team (SLT): Directors, Principals, Board Members	Update on progress of change plan	In-Person update as rolling agenda item

December 2019	Steering Committee Communications Officer(s)	Primary Teaching Faculty	Update on ongoing developments (Allowing for Q&A time)	Weekly Bulletin (monthly) and staff meetings (monthly)
January 2020	Assistant Principal	Instructional Leadership Team: (Director of Curriculum, Curriculum coordinators, Assistant Principals	Update on progress of change plan	In-Person update as rolling agenda item
January 2020	Steering Committee Communications Officer(s)	Primary Teaching Faculty	Update on ongoing developments (Allowing for Q&A time)	Weekly Bulletin (monthly) and staff meetings (monthly)
January 2020	Assistant Principal and/or Steering Committee Communications Officer(s)	Principal's Advisory Council (Parent Group)	Regular (quarterly) update on progress relating to self-study and evaluation (including Q&A time)	In-Person presentation and discussion
February 2020	Assistant Principal	Senior Leadership Team (SLT): Directors, Principals, Board Members	Update on progress of change plan	In-Person update as rolling agenda item
February 2020	Steering Committee Communications Officer(s)	Primary Teaching Faculty	Update on ongoing developments (Allowing for Q&A time)	Weekly Bulletin (monthly) and staff meetings (monthly)

March 2020	Assistant Principal	Primary Teaching Faculty	To share Synthesis of data collected on progress as part of PDSA Cycle	In-Person at staff meeting and electronically via Weekly Bulletin
March 2020	Assistant Principal	Instructional Leadership Team: (Director of Curriculum, Curriculum coordinators, Assistant Principals	Update on progress of change plan	In-Person update as rolling agenda item
March 2020	Steering Committee Communications Officer(s)	Primary Teaching Faculty	Update on ongoing developments (Allowing for Q&A time)	Weekly Bulletin (monthly) and staff meetings (monthly)
April 2020	Assistant Principal and/or Steering Committee Communications Officer(s)	Principal's Advisory Council (Parent Group)	Regular (quarterly) update on progress relating to self-study and evaluation (including Q&A time)	In-Person presentation and discussion
April 2020	Assistant Principal	Senior Leadership Team (SLT): Directors, Principals, Board Members	Update on progress of change plan	In-Person update as rolling agenda item
April 2020	Steering Committee Communications Officer(s)	Primary Teaching Faculty	Update on ongoing developments (Allowing for Q&A time)	Weekly Bulletin (monthly) and staff meetings (monthly)

May 2020	Assistant Principal	Instructional Leadership Team: (Director of Curriculum, Curriculum coordinators, Assistant Principals	Update on progress of change plan	In-Person update as rolling agenda item
May 2020	Steering Committee Communications Officer(s)	Primary Teaching Faculty	Update on ongoing developments (Allowing for Q&A time)	Weekly Bulletin (monthly) and staff meetings (monthly)
May 2020	Article written by Director of Teaching and Learning	All members of the school community	Review of self-study and update on progress on areas of focus, including student action	School Newsletter (Published online and distributed by email)
June 2020	Assistant Principal	Senior Leadership Team (SLT): Directors, Principals, Board Members	Update on progress of change plan	In-Person update as rolling agenda item
June 2020	Assistant Principal	Instructional Leadership Team: (Director of Curriculum, Curriculum coordinators, Assistant Principals	Update on progress of change plan	In-Person update as rolling agenda item
June 2020	Steering Committee Communications Officer(s)	Primary Teaching Faculty	Update on ongoing developments (Allowing for Q&A time)	Weekly Bulletin (monthly) and staff meetings (monthly)

June 2020	Assistant Principal	Primary Teaching Faculty	To share Synthesis of data collected on progress as part of PDSA Cycle	In-Person at staff meeting and electronically via Weekly Bulletin
June 2020	Director (School Head) and/or Director of Teaching and Learning (with input from assistant principal)	Whole school including teaching faculty and support staff	To share successes relating to the evaluation process and progress made towards goals relating to recommendations from previous evaluation	End-of-Year Whole-School Address
Aug. –Oct. 2020 (Date TBD)	IB Visiting Team (Evaluators)	Leaders of accreditation and evaluation committees	Preliminary findings of evaluation shared	In-Person dialogue
Dec. 2020- Feb. 2021 (Date TBD)	IB Report	School Leaders	Full Evaluation Report sent to school.	Written document
March 2021	Director	Whole-School Community	Article in community newsletter sharing findings of the evaluation. Full report posted on school website and available to all stakeholders.	Newsletter Article and formal document available to community