Building a Culture of Collaboration

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Building a Culture of Collaboration

By

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AN ORGANIZATIONAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE AND POSTDOCTORAL STUDIES

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE

DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

LONDON, ONTARIO

AUGUST 30, 2019
Abstract

This Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP) explores how a school principal can create a culture of collaboration among teachers. The OIP’s problem of practice emerged due to a lack of collaboration among teachers at a school. School data revealed that the lack of collaboration directly impacted teacher classroom practice and ultimately student achievement. Two change theories, the Change Path Model (Cawsey, Deszca, & Ingles, 2016) and the Appreciative Inquiry Model (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987) influenced the thinking behind the organizational change plan. Within the organizational change plan, building relationships by developing trust and creating professional learning communities through a focus on leadership approaches have been developed as priorities.

The literature clearly points out that no matter the leadership approach or change theory employed, it is the recipients of change that will ultimately determine the success or failure of the OIP’s problem of practice. Focusing on an appreciative approach through the Appreciative Inquiry Model, developing trust through transformational leadership, and building capacity of teachers has been explored and found to be significant contributing factors in the change process. These constructs support the change of becoming a thriving culture of teachers collaborating to improve their practice and ultimately improving student achievement.

Key Words: Transformational Leadership, Collaboration, Professional Learning Communities, Organizational Change, Building Relationships.
Executive Summary

Creating a culture of collaboration among teachers is at the core of the Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP). The OIP’s problem of practice emerged due to a lack of collaboration among teachers. The lack of collaboration not only failed to align with pedagogical best practices in a school but it also negatively impacted a district’s vision of collaborating to build a community of learners.

Recent literature contends that collaboration among teachers has the largest effect on teacher learning and ultimately student achievement (Earl & Katz, 2007; Fullan, 2015; Hattie, 2015). To determine how to best approach the OIP’s problem of practice a comprehensive literature review was undertaken. The review included leadership approaches, change theories, framing changes, and a critical organization analysis.

Understanding the issues at hand has been the first step in attempting to effect change. Katz, Dack and Malloy (2018) place emphasis on leaders acquiring an in-depth understanding of a challenge placed before them. Obtaining a clear understanding of how to create a culture of collaboration begins with a comprehensive review of school reports, student achievement data, an exploration of the organization’s vision and values, leadership approaches to change, and the level of teacher readiness for change.

Leadership is pivotal to the success of the OIP’s problem of practice. Both transformational and situational leadership approaches have been employed. The transformational approach was driven by inspiration, motivation and trustworthiness. Although transformational leadership has been the predominant approach used, its limitation of focusing on the human element led to the use of the situational approach in certain situations. It would be naïve to think that simply inspiring or motivating people would affect the desired change. The situational approach allows for both a directive and supportive stance.
Solutions were created to bring about the new vision for change. The solutions embraced status quo leadership and the creation of professional learning communities. The school data revealed a decline in literacy at both the primary and secondary levels. Building relationships and creating professional communities with teachers at these two levels were explored through the OIP’s problem of practice.

The Appreciative Inquiry Model (Cooperrider & Srivasta, 1987) and the Change Path Model (Cawsey, Deszca, & Ingles, 2016) are change theories that will lead to the implementation of the OIP’s problem of practice. The Appreciative Inquiry Model oversees the positive and collaborative approach to change that fosters an appreciative approach and mindset. The Change Path Model provides a sequential framework for change. This model allows for a greater understanding of the teachers’ readiness level. The readiness level has proved to be a significant factor insofar as the teachers, the recipients of the change, bringing success or failure of the new vision.

Communicating the new change vision through a communication plan provided an opportunity to mobilize the support for the change. One strategy that has proven impactful has been a year of discovery which provided and continues to provide an opportunity to listen, observe and give time to teachers in making decisions that would affect the change. Year One has focused and continues to focus on building relationships and Year Two, will focus on creating professional learning communities.
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And finally, feedback received was seen as a key indicator for change through a process of continuous improvement. This process has inspired and motivated teachers to begin creating a culture of collaboration where enhanced teacher practice and ultimately improved student achievement will result.
Acknowledgements

Over the past three years there are many people to whom thanks are offered:

Thank you to my advisor, Dr. Beate Planche for her endless support and purposeful feedback.

Thank you to the professors in the Faculty of Education at Western University; each contributed to my extensive knowledge and foundation of educational leadership.

Thank you to my Western University colleagues who provided support and equally important, and when it mattered most, a sense of humour and encouragement.

Thank you to my work colleagues for continuously sharing their professional experiences with me which have contributed to my enhanced learning.

Thank you to my school staff for providing opportunities to implement the problem of practice.

Thank you to my friends for being accepting of me frequently saying “I can’t...I need to do my paper”.

Thank you to my mom and dad for ensuring I was always well fed during many of my long days and nights of writing.

Thank you to my four boys for always being encouraging and motivating.

Thank you to my husband for always being by my side.
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Chapter 1: Introduction and Problem of Practice

The Organizational Improvement Plan’s (OIP) problem of practice focuses on how a school principal can create a thriving culture of collaboration among teachers. More specifically, the desired outcome of this OIP’s problem of practice examines leadership approaches and change theories that ignite collaboration among teachers which ultimately leads to improved teacher practice and student achievement.

This first chapter introduces the OIP’s problem of practice and briefly discusses the organizational changes that will result from its implementation. To better understand the challenges of organizational change, this chapter begins with an exploration of the district and school’s contextual environments. The chapter also endeavours to clearly articulate my position as principal on what the problem of practice is, how it came to be, why the change is needed and the vision for change. An in-depth analysis of relevant data and questions helps guide the change. And lastly, the chapter investigates change theories and leadership approaches which ultimately support the successful implementation of the OIP’s problem of practice.

Organizational Context

The organizational context of the district and school is significant in helping understand the reasons behind decisions being made in pursuing the OIP’s problem of practice. The sections below will describe in detail important aspects of the district and school’s context, vision, and beliefs.

District Organizational Context and Vision

The Valley District School Board (VDSB) (a pseudonym) is considered a small sized rural school district in Ontario. The district is composed predominantly of a white English speaking low socio-economic population and spans geographically over 8,000 kilometers.
The organizational structure of the VDSB is led by a Director of Education and a senior leadership team comprised of eight superintendents of education. The superintendents are responsible for families of schools, various portfolios and the supervision of principals within the schools. The VDSB trustees work directly with the Director in terms of policy and governance.

The VDSB is comprised of 10 secondary, 25 elementary, and five K-12 schools. There are approximately 800 teachers, 70 administrators, and a population of just under 12,000 students. In terms of academic achievement, the VDSB has traditionally met provincial standards on Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) assessments, save for junior math and Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) provincial results. Provincial assessments are a district focus in addition to mental health and well-being initiatives.

The VDSB’s values of respect, caring, initiative and optimism are embedded in schools and system environments. The district’s vision speaks to students and staff becoming a community of learners through engagement, curiosity and innovation (Strategic Plan, 2017). This vision is visible in classrooms and at central professional development sessions. In most schools “teachers are at the student desk” making sure learning is happening. At professional development sessions, teachers are engaged in the professional learning. The district’s goals address teaching excellence, respectful learning environments and availability of resources. More specifically, under the goal of teaching excellence, the VDSB embraces the vision of “developing and reflecting on best practices that consistently improve student achievement” (Strategic Plan, 2017, p. 3).

In terms of alignment with the district’s vision of being a community of learners and developing best practices, support systems are in place through the VDSB’s organizational structure both internally at the school level and externally through curriculum coaches’ support.
A curriculum coach is attached to schools who is tasked with supporting teachers with educational content, pedagogical practices and new learning initiatives. The principal is expected to support the instructional program alongside the curriculum coach in the hope of meeting the district’s vision of creating a community of learners and developing best practices.

**District Fundamental Beliefs**

The VDSB’s work as an educational institution falls within the functionalist paradigm whereby beliefs are rooted in sociological positivism and where society is held together by cohesion, solidarity and order (Burrell & Morgan, 1979). This functionalist paradigm is clearly evidenced by the aforementioned description of the organization’s hierarchical structure and its work. Additionally, much of the senior leadership’s work focuses on functions and tasks (Bush, 2015) such as developing procedures and setting budgets as highlighted by the VDSB’s strategic plan.

Within the functionalist paradigm organizational change is something that is controlled and concerned with retaining the status quo and equilibrium within societies. As Smith and Graetz (2011) suggest “implementing change involves a series of corrective steps driven by senior management and rolled out in a systematic and orderly manner” (p. 184). The authors also suggest that the goal of organizational change within the functionalist paradigm is to regain equilibrium that was once lost. As this chapter unfolds, I will examine how the OIP’s problem of practice is somewhat challenged by the systematic and corrective measures found within the district’s functionalist paradigm.

In terms of approaches and ideology, I would argue that the VDSB embraces both a liberal and conservative approach depending on the situation that presents itself. In terms of a liberal ideology, the VDSB focuses on people as evidenced predominantly in its vision of
creating a community of learners. The conservative approach is one that focuses on academic achievement through order and direction and is also a lens through which the VDSB operates. This lens is primarily visible when initiatives or processes fail to align with the vision of the district.

The OIP’s problem of practice acknowledges and uses a conservative lens to highlight that there is much room for improvement in the area of collaborative work among teachers. Furthermore, this reality impacts the potential for improved student achievement. However, this improvement does not come without challenges. These challenges are discussed below within the context of the problem of practice.

**Context of the Problem of Practice**

Similar to many schools within our district, as well as schools outside of the district, collaborative efforts of bringing teachers together to improve their practice are frequently met with challenges (Fullan, 2011). It was observed by the district’s leadership and myself as the new principal that Keppoch K-12 School (KS) (a pseudonym) had similar challenges. After a review of school reports including, the School Effective Framework (SEF) report, conversations with teachers, anecdotal notes of curriculum coaches, perceptual student data and student achievement data, it was determined by the district that collaboration among teachers was an area of need and one that required immediate attention. This initiative of bringing teachers together with a goal of improving instructional practice not only regains order and equilibrium (Smith & Graetz, 2011) within the district’s vision but it also ensures that the district’s vision of “developing a community of learners” is visible in words and actions (Kouzes & Posner, 2013).
School History and Context

The OIP’s problem of practice will directly impact KS. The school is situated in a small English speaking community of approximately 6,000 people. It provides education for students from Kindergarten through to grade 12 (K-12) in one building under the leadership of a principal and vice-principal. There are approximately 800 students and 90 staff. The school is resource rich and offers many educational programs and extracurricular opportunities to all students. Traditionally, the school was seen as a high performing school having exceptional EQAO results in grade three, grade six and grade nine as well as championship sport teams. The school’s mission speaks to learning together in respectful learning environments. New teaching staff is hired every year, however, the majority of the staff has worked at the school for over 15 years.

From a review of the data and in conversations with teachers, it appears that over the past eight years there has been a decline in professional development and bringing teachers together to collaborate due to competing interests resulting from school amalgamations and challenges with demands of community and district operational needs. A focus on the operational needs of the school, as opposed to professional development needs for teachers, eventually led to a sense of discontentment among the teaching staff. As the new principal of the school recognizing these concerns it was obvious that keeping the status quo is clearly not an option.

Leithwood, Seashore, Anderson, and Wahlstrom (2004) note “the chance of any reform of improving student learning is remote unless district and school leaders agree with its purposes and appreciate what is required to make it work” (p. 6). The VDSB, the teachers of the school, and myself as the principal, will need to develop and understand a shared vision- that of creating a culture of collaboration. Kouzes and Posner (2013) point out that having a clear and shared vision that sets direction will ultimately support organizational change. The hope moving
forward with this problem of practice, is to develop a shared vision with teachers that inspires a culture where collaboration is visible and valued, recognizing that collaborative work ultimately improves student achievement.

Having a clear understanding of the district and school context and their vision and beliefs will enable me, as the principal of KS, to appropriately consider leadership approaches as well as allow me the opportunity to reflect on my personal philosophy to best ensure the OIP’s success. The next section will discuss and explore my leadership position and lens statement.

**Leadership Position and Lens Statement**

In reflecting on my work experiences as a teacher and administrator, I have been provided with insightful learning into my own habits of thought, varying perspectives and practices. This learning has enabled me to articulate how I ascribe to my personal way of thinking and leading and how my problem of practice evolved.

In determining an issue to examine and explore as my problem of practice, I chose an issue that I felt needed much support at the school level and one that supports a need in other schools. Pollock (2013) in her work speaks to a problem of practice as a situation that exists in one’s place of work and one which is identified through reflective practice. My own personal reflections and experiences were factors that contributed to choosing this problem of practice. My personal leadership philosophy of valuing people and adhering to order and structure also influenced my decision to choose this problem of practice.

I grew up in an upper-middle class Catholic family where we adhered to authority and structure while at the same time valued and respected people. This upbringing led me to pursue a degree in education as well as in law. The field of education allowed me to learn more about people and community and working as a lawyer heightened my awareness of prescribing to policy, authority and order.
A few years ago in my willingness to continuously improve as a leader, I initiated a 360 Degree Assessment of my leadership. This assessment confirmed my heightened values of fostering mutual respect and trust as well as demonstrating honesty and integrity within the school community. These findings align with my belief in supporting and serving people and that a leader be a citizen beyond reproach whose moral compass is calibrated by values and beliefs that are aligned with public education.

My personal belief best aligns to the leadership theory known as transformational leadership. Originally coined by Burns (1978), Northouse (2016) cites that transformational leadership is a theory that highlights a moral purpose for leading others as well as a way of being. Cherkowski, Walker, and Kutsyuruba (2015) argue that it is a concept of empowering others to act “towards a higher collective purpose and tap into the needs to followers” (p. 5). This drive toward a higher purpose transforms an organization’s culture (Schein, 2010) which is a critical and necessary outcome required within my problem of practice.

While hoping to attain the change required within my problem of practice, I cannot ignore the need to be responsive to the day to day management and leadership challenges presented before me, hence, my employ of the situational leadership approach. The specific attributes recognized within the situational leadership approach, specifically having strong knowledge and understanding of problem solving, maintaining confidence when faced with major challenges and supporting educators are all evidenced in my 360 Degree Leadership Assessment (2015).

The premise of the situational leadership theory postulates the notion that different situations demand different kinds of leadership approaches (Northouse, 2016). Hersey and Blanchard’s (1969) work (as cited within Northouse, 2016) state “…the situational approach
stresses that leadership is composed of both a directive and supportive dimension and that each has to be applied appropriately in a given situation” (p. 93). Whether it is supporting, directing, coaching or delegating a highly effective leader is attuned to and understands the working environment. It is my belief that adopting situational leadership practices, aligned with my own personal attributes within the transformational leadership approach, will allow me to best navigate the day to day challenges of leading my problem of practice.

Moreover, with the aim to effect a change, I believe that an effective leader in such circumstances requires the situational leadership approach which can be deployed and managed in a given context. A leader who encompasses these skills to assess and respond to needs as well as provide leadership will produce the desired results (Leithwood, Seashore, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004). In sum, these two leadership approaches, transformational and situational, when aligned with my values and attributes, will support the outcomes needed within my OIP’s problem of practice.

And finally, a note of caution regarding a key element required for success. I am new to this school and building relationships with teachers will undoubtedly determine the success of OIP’s problem of practice. Kouzes and Posner (2013) argue that effective leadership is about building and sustaining relationships. Tschannen-Moran and Gareis (2015) found that in order for principals to lead effectively the element of trust is needed to be present. For example, my strength in building trusting relationships as evidenced by my 360 Degree Leadership Assessment (2015) will be one of the most important factors underpinning any leadership approach that I might adopt in achieving the outcomes within my problem of practice.
The element of trust coupled with my transformational and situational leadership approaches will serve me well in understanding the present culture of KS and addressing its challenges.

**Leadership Problem of Practice**

After an extensive review of the data, including teacher interviews, conversations, school reports and student achievement data it is evident that there a gap between the current practices of the school and the future desired state. A collaborative practice among teachers is part of the VDSB’s vision for all of its schools (Strategic Plan, 2017) and it is presently not evidenced in KS. As the new principal of the school, my work is to effectively lead in areas of management and leadership to build a culture of collaboration among teachers. Hence, the essence of my problem of practice is both timely and vital. Although this change is timely and vital, I recognize that there will be challenges with initiating this change. For example, I am new to KS and as a result getting to know the people, leading instruction as well as understanding and addressing operational and managerial issues of the school are challenges that may hinder some of the work involved in addressing the OIP’s problem of practice. My hope is that I am able to employ my leadership strengths as well as building capacity in others to minimize these challenges.

The future desired state of building collaboration would include me as the principal employing a variety of leadership approaches to influence teachers in creating a culture of collaboration to improve practice. This desired state would also align with the VDSB’s vision of developing best practices of teachers to improve student achievement. Fullan (2011) points out in his research that “countless instances show that collaborative schools, in which leaders help teachers focus together on improving the learning of all students, get better results and have more engaged and satisfied teachers and students” (p. 54). Although significant, a continued challenge
will be balancing the change and attending to the day to day operations of a school. The school data and the recommendations outlined in school reports has positioned me well to thoughtfully consider and address the needs of KS. Many of these considerations will be leveraged through Bolman and Deal’s (2013) conceptual framework discussed below.

**Framing the Problem of Practice**

Bolman and Deal (2013) provide a conceptual framework to help view and understand organizations which assists leaders in better understanding their organizations in order to formulate solutions to achieve desired outcomes. The authors posit this understanding through the explicit use of four different perspectives or frames which include the human resource frame, the structural frame, the political frame and lastly, the symbolic frame. Bolman and Deal (2013) state “a frame is a coherent set of ideas or beliefs forming a prism or lens that enables you to see and understand more clearly what goes on from day to day” (p. 41). While people tend to use a single frame in viewing a situation, the authors state that the use of all four frames, namely the multi-frame approach, is vastly superior (Bolman & Deal, 2013). Using a multi-framed approach in understanding the problem of practice provides several narratives to explore and consider.

**Human Resource frame**

The human resource frame identifies people as being the most important asset of an organization. The frame focuses on empowering people, creating conditions for sustained intrinsic motivation and building relationships. Mabey (2003) suggests that paying attention to individuals’ feelings, needs and capacity for learning is equally important within the human resource frame. This frame, viewed in the context of my problem of practice, has significant applicability.

I recognize that teachers generally aspire to be leaders within their classrooms and are intrinsically motivated individuals (Hargreaves, Boyle and Harris, 2014). Mintzberg (1979) speaks to the importance of empowering people rather than measuring their performance.
Empowering others falls within this frame and is evidenced within the constructs of collaboration. Further as Mabey (2003) suggests that learning is at the centre of the human resource frame and as a result any solution needs to provide teachers with opportunities to learn with purpose and meaning.

Viewed from this frame, my priority to establish and build relationships would be to listen, and provide time and support for teachers through the change. A first step as the new principal is getting to know the teachers and building their trust (Tschannen-Moran & Graeis, 2015). Limitations within this frame include the commitments of time and resources required when investing in people, which are increasingly rare in the field of education. There is a risk of failure of the OIP’s problem of practice without the investment in time and resources. That said, my observations at the school is the teachers’ readiness for change reduces this risk. A second limitation of the human resource frame is that not all teachers are intrinsically motivated to learn or change. Although some teachers are intrinsically motivated, others would prefer to overlook the “soft skills” of building relationship and supporting one another.

**Structural frame**

The structural frame focuses on hierarchy, rules, policies and planning (Bolman & Deal, 2013). The authors argue that the structural frame places emphasis on “structures that need to be designed with an eye toward desired ends….and the talents of the workforce” (Bolman & Deal, 2013, p. 56). With this in mind, the OIP’s problem of practice would see me as the principal directing teachers on what to do and how to do it. As an example, I would be directing communication of the vision through staff meetings and would outline who is part of the collaborative team and what the agenda of the meeting consists of. This approach appeals to those teachers who are extrinsically motivated. This directive approach promotes accountability
to the inherent hierarchy, namely, myself the principal (Wood, 2017). Wood (2017) states “unless there are clear processes and structures in place to affect change, there can emerge a feeling among staff that they have limited control.... which in turn can lead to resistance” (p. 34). In my view, this singular approach of the principal directing and planning would not lead to the successful outcome of the OIP’s problem of practice. It is in direct contradiction of the collaborative approach.

**Political frame**

Bolman and Deal’s (2013) political frame sees “organizations as coalitions of different individuals and interest groups” (p.188). As the principal, I can draw upon a number of political factors that can influence the vision of enhancing change. Connolly, James, and Beales (2011) argue “to bring about change the leader needs to forge alliances, nurture selected members and be somewhat manipulative” (p. 425). In terms of this frame, I would need to determine who the “powerholders” are within the school. There are a number of teachers who have been working at the school for many years, influencing these teachers would enable me to bring about the desired change. As the new principal there has been momentum moving forward with changing the culture mostly due to building relationships and it would be important for me to identify the “powerholders” in a timely fashion to continue building the momentum of change.

**Symbolic frame**

Bolman and Deal (2013) describe the symbolic frame as “how we see things around here” (p. 244). Within the school, traditions are rich in terms of the larger community supporting the school, however, within the school itself many teachers have been working in isolation. The vision of this problem of practice is to support a change of culture through inspiration and motivation. Both of these concepts underpin and form part of the symbolic
frame. “Culture forms the superglue that bonds an organization, unites people and helps an enterprise to accomplish desired ends” (Bolman & Deal, 2013, p. 248). Although important, the symbolic frame standing alone would not lead to the success of this problem of practice.

**Multi-framing**

“No one image is right for all times” (Bolman & Deal, 2013, p. 355) and as a result I believe that using all four frames would bring significant clarity in understanding this problem of practice and allow for the proper utilization of leadership efforts to achieve the desired outcome of change. Inspiring and supporting teachers, planning and directing and finally leading, in my role as principal, will support such achievement. The constructs of framing are both complex and challenging. My hope is the application of a multi-frame approach will provide a sustained solution to this problem of practice. I will need to be required to ensure my personal preference of viewing problems from the human resource and structural lens needs to be tempered to allow the other perspectives to be considered.

The concept of framing is challenging for leaders, however, other challenges unfold during a change process, these include but are not limited to, organizational conflict and organizational readiness. Considerations of these challenges are described below.

**Guiding Questions and Leadership Challenges**

There are several organizational leadership challenges in creating a culture of collaboration. One specific challenge is to ensure that the OIP’s problem of practice is situated within the fundamental beliefs of the district, acknowledging that the district strives for equilibrium and cohesion in terms of its vision of developing a community of learners. Another challenge is the consideration of organizational conflict. Consideration will be given to regaining the equilibrium of the district’s vision and the change readiness of the staff.
Understanding the present culture of the school, determining the readiness level of the teachers for change, and reflecting on my own readiness, are relevant factors in this work. Many questions will need to be addressed including the value teachers give to leadership and the concept of collaboration, as every organization has a culture with underlying expectations. Within the realm of the teachers’ readiness level, consideration will be given to identifying cultural assumptions (Schein, 2010) and the question of whether change efforts need to include the entire teaching staff. Schein (2010) suggests that “attempting to study an entire culture in all of its facets is not only impractical but also usually inappropriate.” (p. 316). This thinking is given consideration within the OIP’s problem of practice.

Addressing these challenges and assumptions will need strong leadership. The questions become: (a) what type of leadership approach is needed to reach the desired outcome and (b) how will it be determined whether or not the leadership approach has been impactful?

In my review of leadership approaches, I believe that both the transformational leadership and the situational leadership approaches would support the implementation of the problem of practice.

The transformational approach lends itself to a high level of commitment to the vision and goals of the school as well as a focus on “the process by which leadership seeks to influence activities and outcomes” (Bush, 2015, p. 38). Additionally, the approach brings with it hope, optimism and energy to a renewed commitment of goals (Leithwood, 2005).

The situational approach embraces a directive and supportive style of leadership when applied to certain situations. This leadership approach will address the need to bring equilibrium to the district vision and aligns with my values of supporting people. It also acknowledges that
the change leader must match his/her “style to the competence and commitment of the followers” (Northouse, 2016, p. 94). The needs of the followers will be examined as the chapter unfolds.

Both the transformational and situational approaches best align with my values of supporting people and adhering to structure. These leadership approaches as well as understanding the readiness of the teachers will leverage the OIP’s problem of practice of building a culture of collaboration among teachers. This understanding will also support the identification of the gap between the district’s vision and the school’s present vision. The identified gap is discussed in the next section.

**Leadership and Focused Vision for Change**

There is a gap between the vision and goals of the district and the school in question. The district’s vision focuses on collaborative practices of teachers using best practices to improve student achievement (Strategic Plan, 2017). The vision is presently not reflected in the school due to pre-existing priorities including amalgamation of schools and other operational matters of the school.

In order to close the gap and regain equilibrium (Smith & Graetz, 2001) in terms of connecting the school’s vision of learning together with that of the district’s vision, the change needs to be well understood and actioned. Cawsey, Deszca, and Ingols (2016) state “creating a vision is a key part of defining a future state and, in turn, it is central to any gap analysis done by the change leader” (p. 121). Kouzes and Posner (2013) point out leaders have “a responsibility to attend to the future of their organizations” (p. 34) as well as encouraging members of the organization to be part of the vision.

Knowing the current state of KS primarily through teacher conversations and interviews, most teachers will be inspired to be part of the shared visioning. Along with shared visioning,
the success of the future state of the school will be dependent on identifying and actioning priorities for the change and its change drivers, which include various stakeholders.

**Priorities for Change and Change Drivers**

The school data has provided me with evidence that change is a needed prerequisite of moving forward towards implementation of this problem of practice. In terms of change, Waks (2007) argues “organizational change requires a readjustment of the existing organizations’ norms so that the organization can once again function and have order” (p. 282).

The school data, including reports, highlighted several priorities and recommendations. For example, the recommendations included, reducing the number of school goals and developing a school-wide needs assessment to determine at risk students. However, the most significant recommendation highlighted the need for collaboration among teachers, hence the focus of the OIP’s problem of practice.

Prioritizing this change begins with identifying stakeholders who will support the change. The stakeholders involved in this change process include teachers, the district leadership team and myself as the principal. It is important to note that students are the ultimate beneficiaries of the desired change, however, they are not directly involved in the change process. The various stakeholders who support the change are discussed below.

**Teachers as Stakeholder**

In order to move forward with the OIP’s problem of practice, employing effective leadership skills, including being responsive to the needs of the teachers, will be required.

Within the change process, I recognize that teachers are the most significant stakeholders and using a multi-framed approach (Bolman & Deal, 2013) will support the involvement of all teachers ready for the change. As an example, being strategic on who to
include in the process (political), supporting teachers’ individual needs and desires (human resource), how to motivate, encourage and inspire (symbolic frame) as well as providing direction and defining clear goals (structural) will be beneficial to this change.

Although a multi-framed approach is critical to a successful organizational change, the underpinnings of trusting relationships needs highlighting. For example, within the change process “being friendly, approachable, and open to input from teachers...and being engaged in instructional program of the school” (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015, p. 26) are leadership behaviours that will build trust between teachers and me as the principal. Building trust also includes being responsive to teachers’ needs. The element of trust is critical and will be further explored in chapter two.

District/ Senior Leadership Team as Stakeholder

As the new principal, I will be responsive and accountable to the district leadership team for the recommendations outlined in the school reports. Although my focus and attention will be on teachers, I recognize that I will be placed in a difficult position as leaders “are caught between the worldviews and decisions of policy makers and the needs and views of their own staff” (Wood, 2017, p. 33). For example, the district has spent a considerable amount of fiscal resources and time to review the school’s processes to ensure it aligns with the district’s vision. There is no doubt that the senior leadership team will want to see immediate changes. I will need to ensure that the district understands that change required will take time and to be prepared for potential conflict should the district’s desire for timely outcomes not be realized.
Principal as Stakeholder

As the new principal, I need to be aware of my own biases (a strong focus on the human resource and structural points of view) and leadership capacities in order to affect change. I have accepted this new assignment and have the motivation and energy to attend to its demands. The change process should be the “focus and the required task” of my work (Wood, 2011, p. 34) since it was a priority of the district leadership team to implement the changes. However, becoming distracted by the day to day operations of the school and demands of the district leaves minimal time for building collaboration; a limitation that is inevitable.

In order to envision the future state, it will be important to seek out influential teachers to support building capacity of others. This would allow me the time to attend to operational tasks when required to do so. Teachers, as drivers of change in the classroom working with effective resources to support collaboration, will help bring the vision closer to fruition.

Formulating a clear vision would also be a driver of change to support the desired state. The vision will need to be well articulated, attainable and understood. One example is understanding that the change of building a culture of collaboration among teachers will be a multi-year journey. Another example is communicating the vision among teachers, staff, and the parent community. Communicating the vision through planning and implementation will be further discussed in chapter three.

Understanding both the priorities for change and drivers of change are critical to the change process, however, equally significant is determining the “why” behind the change, understanding its complexity and determining organizational readiness. These considerations will be examined next.
Organizational Readiness

Recognizing that organizational change is complex, difficult, and uncertain of success (Bolman & Deal, 2013) some argue that having a better understanding of people and of what is happening inside the organization are critical to the change process (Wheatley & Kellner-Rogers, 1998; Bolman & Deal, 2013; Cawsey et al., 2016). I would tend to accept this proposition based on my own experiences and beliefs in leading change. The difficulty of bringing about change and the need to understand people, in this case, teachers as the recipients of the change, require effective leadership. Wheatley and Kellner-Rogers (1998) contend that “failures of organizational change are the result of some deep misunderstanding of who people are and what’s going on inside organizations” (p. 1).

Some questions that require attention and thought when initiating change within an organization are as follows: (a) Why the change? (b) Who are the stakeholders involved in the change? (c) What are the needs of the stakeholders? (d) What is the degree of readiness for the change? (Cawsey et al., 2016).

In terms of why the change, it was determined that KS is deemed to have had a challenge with teachers collaborating to improve their practice and as a result a steady decline in student achievement became evident. Building a culture of collaboration among teachers with an outcome of ultimately improving student achievement is not an easy task or quick fix. The district recognizes the critical aspects of restoring a school culture and renewing collaboration among teachers. Both tasks are significant as a culture needs to be “nurtured and built up by school leadership” (Sergiovanni, 1984, p. 10) and building collaboration requires both structural and supportive approaches. For example, a structural approach would include consideration for teacher leaders to help support the vision and a supportive approach would include providing
time and resources to begin the process of collaboration. From the district’s perspective when these elements are restored the district’s vision will be aligned once again.

After addressing and understanding why change is necessary, organizational change readiness must be examined as it is arguably one of the most significant factors involved in the change process (Holt, Armenakis, Field, & Harris, 2007). Cunningham et al. (2002) determined factors that influence change readiness. The factors are as follows: the need for change, a sense of one’s ability to successfully accomplish change and the opportunity to participate in the change process.

Cawsey et al. (2016) have created a number of tools to support leaders in determining the readiness of the organization. These authors have created a framework for change, which they call The Change Path Model (CPM), a readiness-for-change questionnaire and a checklist for readiness change. The CPM will be explored in chapter two.

In terms of attaining the vision of the problem of practice and influencing teachers in leading the change initiative, recognizing my own readiness in terms of leadership approaches will be a factor to consider. Cawsey et al. (2016) point out “organizational leaders can be lulled into relying on past successes and strategies rather than investigating and questioning and in so doing they risk failing to develop an organization capacity to adapt to a changing environment” (Cawsey et al., 2016, p.103). As a result, I will need to be aware that my effective leadership approaches which brought success to my former schools may not work in this school environment. Being fully aware of the changing environment (Cawsey et al. 2016) as well as possessing leadership attributes of credibility and trust to lead will support the implementation. These critical attributes will be further explored in chapter two.
Additionally, when creating a vision, internal and external forces need consideration as these forces shape change within the organization. These forces include, but are not limited to, the involvement of leadership, previous change experiences of members of an organization, the organizational culture, and the organization’s structure (Cawsey et al., 2016). In terms of the OIP’s problem of practice both the organizational structure and the organizational culture of the school will be taken into consideration.

In terms of the organizational structure, a district of education that subscribes to a hierarchical structure where change is controlled and “involves a series of corrective steps driven by senior management and rolled out in a systematic and orderly manner” (Smith & Graetz, 2011, p.184). Within this structure, Wood (2017) argues that in order for organizational change to be successful the changes need to be linear and predictable in nature. For example, in KS, the first corrective step (Smith & Graetz, 2011) originated when the leadership team requested the school vision be aligned with the district vision. My leadership approach of being task-oriented falls within the linear and predictable structure to which the district adheres.

Wood (2017) further argues, however, that schools are considered to be adaptable, flexible and non-linear systems. Although the school structurally is hierarchical (principal, vice-principal, division lead teacher, teachers) in order for the change to occur, especially in terms of building a culture of collaboration among teachers, teachers need to be engaged in the process. The nature of the work does not lend itself to linear or predictable work but rather work that involves problem solving and risk taking. As such, a paradox is clearly visible between the district and the school’s structure- one linear and the other non-linear. Being in control and not in control within an organization lends itself to competing factors. These competing factors will be further examined within the implementation stage of the OIP’s problem of practice.
Barriers to change initiatives may also stem from organizational cultures due primarily to a culture’s complexities. As Wood (2017) points out, cultures develop a “paradigm” or “worldview” through which they work. Sergiovanni (1984) argues that school cultures can be characterized as strong, weak, functional or dysfunctional. Lumby (2012) states “reflecting on culture may provide a helpful way of getting at the broad picture and understanding the overall characteristics, categories and groups in which we work” (p. 452).

At one point in time the school in question was known as high performing and collaborative and would be defined as a strong and functional school culture. However, over the past number of years this worldview or characterization disappeared mostly due to district operational challenges and school amalgamations. The focus on operations and school amalgamations led to a very limited focus on building relationships.

From numerous conversations with teachers, teacher interviews, and my observations, the majority of teachers are yearning and ready for change. During the interviews, however, it was evident that there was a small number of teachers that do appreciate the status quo; working independently of others. As a result, two distinct groups of teachers are clearly identified.

In terms of culture, as an example, one group can be described as ready and active participants in the change initiative and the other group, although small, can be described as not ready or resistors. The focus of the OIP’s problem of practice will be on the teachers willing to change, however, an effort to influence the resistor group will be made by attempting to better understand these teachers’ subtle ways (Sergiovanni, 1984).

Although my focus will be on the teachers ready to change, I will need to be cautious of my own confirmation bias in believing there is a unified culture of teachers ready for change when perhaps they are not. Most teachers feel they are required to embrace the principal’s vision
(Bush, 2015) and as a result I will need to be attentive to whether teachers are engaged in the process or simply paying lip service to it.

The concept of organizational readiness requires effective leadership. Determining “why” the change, involving stakeholders in the change and examining the teachers’ readiness for changes comes with challenges. The CPM will help leverage these challenges. However, as the principal leading this OIP’s problem of practice, recognizing my own readiness is critical in order for me to lead effectively. Both the organizational structure and organizational culture are examined within this change process and are proven to be challenges. For example, working within a hierarchical context (organizational structure) does not produce collaboration and having two distinct groups of teachers (organizational culture) some willing to embrace change while others resistant to change, will be problematic to the success of the change initiative.

**Chapter Summary**

In order for me, as principal, to lead this OIP’s problem of practice understanding the organizational context of the district and the school, recognizing my own leadership approaches, and identifying potential change implementation challenges will be important considerations moving forward. This first chapter explored these concepts and provided a foundational understanding for building a culture of collaboration among teachers at KS, the essence of the problem of practice. Specifically, the chapter laid out the urgency for the need for change through the sharing of district and school data which emphasized enhanced professional development and practices among teachers, including the critical importance of teacher collaboration – which, if successful, would result in improved student achievement. The chapter discussed the “why” behind the OIP’s problem of practice and explored the initial concepts of creating a shared vision to support the collaboration of teachers. And finally, the chapter
identified leadership approaches, most notably the transformational and situational approaches, which will guide my practice, as this change process moves forward. This chapter sets the stage for chapter two which explores various change models and identifies possible solutions of the OIP’s problem of practice.
Chapter 2: Planning and Development

This section will first consider and characterize the leadership approaches to addressing the OIP’s problem of practice, a critical step in understanding how to approach a change process. Next, the section will outline change models and explore an analysis of the change. It will also examine proposed solutions and ethical considerations of the desired change.

Leadership Approaches to Change

Higgs and Rowland (2005) contend that up to 70% of change initiatives fail mostly due to leadership. They argue that the problem of failing to lead change initiatives stem in part from the traditional view of seeing the process as being linear and “organizations tending to states of stable equilibrium” (Higgs & Rowland, 2005, p. 122). On the other hand, Kotter (1996) argues that change is a relatively straightforward process that should be driven from the top down. Kotter’s (1996) research has been challenged and suggests that change is a complex process (Cawsey et al., 2016; Fullan, 2011; Higgins & Rowland, 2005) and should not be led with a top-down structure.

There has been much research in the field of organizational change, specifically examining structured approaches to address change and to understand the problem in the hope of seeing a decrease in the number of failed initiatives. Research has identified two distinct types of structured approaches. Higgs and Rowland (2005) identity structured approaches as (a) complicated systems and (b) complex systems. Litchenstein’s (1996) research (cited in Higgs & Rowland, 2005) proposes that the failure of change initiatives stems from how leaders respond to problem solving. It is argued that leaders are trained to solve complicated problems, ones that require thinking and experimentation, with a linear and sequential mindset. Complex problems, however, require leaders to think deeply and address dilemmas rather than arrive at definitive solutions. Similar to this theory is the work of Heifetz (1994) which speaks to understanding and
solving technical and adaptive challenges and characterizing problems as either technical or adaptive. Katz, Dack, and Malloy (2018) place emphasis on leaders acquiring an in-depth understanding of the challenge before them and then characterizing the problem. This characterization is similar to the work of Higgs and Rowland (2005). To best understand the OIP’s problem of practice and to ensure its success, the question that needs to be determined is the following: Is the problem of practice an adaptive or technical challenge or both?

Heifetz (1994) contends that a technical challenge is one where the problem, the solution and the implementation of the problem are clear and can be solved by the knowledge of experts. Conversely, adaptive challenges require new learning and are problems with no ready answers (Heifetz, 1994).

At first glance, I characterized this OIP’s problem of practice as adaptive in nature. At that time, my thinking was that the problem required robust learning and had no ready answers. However, upon acquiring more in-depth knowledge of these concepts through my literature reviews and also a deeper understanding of my workplace environment, including the key stakeholders, I now recognize that this problem of practice should be characterized as more technical in nature. This characterization will be seen specifically within the implementation stage of the problem of practice.

A technical problem is one that has (a) a clear definition (b) a solution is provided by leaders/followers and (c) the problem can be resolved (Heifetz, 1994). Simply put, the OIP’s problem of practice fits within these descriptors. In consideration of the educational context of the problem of practice, Heifetz’s (1994) term of solving a problem will be viewed with a focus on improvement and professional growth. In the school, the staff is discontented and frustrated and as a result ready to revitalize the school culture by beginning to collaborate. Within this
technical challenge much of the work will be focused on leadership approaches and organizational change theories to support and sustain the desired change.

Although I describe the OIP’s problem of practice is technical in nature, I would also argue that there are situations where an adaptive stance will be required. As previously mentioned, most of the staff is ready for change, however, some staff, albeit small in number, are satisfied with the status quo at the school. Moving this other group towards the desired state would be defined as an adaptive challenge. Additionally, Kotter and Schlesinger (2008) contend that leveraging staff who do not understand the change or who have a low tolerance for change will require an adaptive leadership approach in order for change to occur. These challenges require new learning, experimentation and acknowledgment that a solution will be somewhat difficult to attain as solutions are neither linear or sequential.

Now that the problem is characterized as both technical and adaptive, dependent on the situation presented, determining the appropriate leadership approach needs consideration. Although there is growing evidence that the role of leaders significantly impacts the success of change initiatives, there continues to be little research into what specific concepts of leadership support change (Higgs & Rowland, 2005). However, explicitly apparent in the research is that a “very leader-centric approach entailing the leader driving the change through personal involvement persuasion and influence” (Higgs & Rowland, 2005, p. 133) has no correlation to the successful implementation of change initiatives (Leithwood et al., 2009; Tschannen-Morgan, 2014). In contrast, the research contends that leadership described as facilitative, enabling and trusting (Higgs & Rowland, 2005; Tschannen-Morgan & Gareis, 2015) and the leader that builds capacity (Higgs & Rowland, 2005; Fullan & Quinn, 2016) supports successful implementation.
Interestingly, these leadership behaviours fall within the definition of my dominant leadership approach: transformational leadership.

I have chosen transformational leadership as my dominant leadership approach to address the change as it aligns with my values, focuses on the collective and moves away from the top-down hierarchal approach (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005). In terms of propelling the vision forward this leadership approach also aims at building capacity of the group and encourages higher levels of personal commitment to the organization’s goals (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005) through motivation and morality. My role as a transformational leader in creating a culture of collaboration will be to facilitate the shared visioning process, offer individual support to teachers, and develop structures that foster participation in school decision-making while at the same time be motivating and inspiring. In part, some of what has been called leadership moves, will in time transform the school’s culture (Schein, 2010) which is a critical and necessary outcome of the OIP’s problem of practice. Leithwood and Jantzi, (2005) contend that “a consistent pattern of results exist to reveal that the effects of transformational leadership are augmented by factors such as, prior student achievement, family educational culture, organizational culture, shared school goals, and coherent plans and policies” (p. 185). A transformational leadership approach fosters a comprehensive approach to change, which will propel the change forward.

Leadership approaches to change involve thinking and reflection with much consideration given to understanding the problem. The review of the literature suggests, that whatever the problem, a leader who builds capacity within others will have more success in moving change forward. These two concepts require change theory to mobilize the desired change. An in-depth exploration of change theory is examined below.
Framework for Leading the Change Process

Much of the literature contends that many change leaders are unsuccessful in change initiatives because they fail to link planned organizational changes with appropriate change theory (Higgs & Rowland, 2005; Kotter, 1996; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005). These findings are discouraging for leaders in their desire to initiate change within their organizations. However, the research on failed initiatives has motivated me to invest a considerable amount of time in reviewing the literature on this challenging topic.

In my review, I have attempted to ascertain the most critical attributes of organizational change as well as determine which specific approaches for leading change best support the OIP’s problem of practice.

The complexity of change can be simplified somewhat by recognizing that there are two distinct characterizations of organizational change: what to change and how to change (Cawsey et al., 2016). For example, many leaders know what to change but most do not know how to change. As a consequence of not knowing the how to change, initiatives fail to succeed.

In addressing the complexity of why initiatives are ineffective or unsuccessful, Godkin (2010) contends that organizations are apathetic to change due to preconditioned mental models and modes of behaviour. The author points out that the mental models require unlearning if change is to occur. Further to this research, Kegan and Lahey (2009) state that mindsets of deeply held beliefs inhibit the desire to change. For example, I am seeing that the other group of teachers is quite content with the status quo. Some teachers prefer to work in isolation and are unwilling to participate in professional development practices with other teachers.

Although there is complexity in unlearning mental models, Godkin (2010) suggests that a mental model or the inertia to change can be strengthened through leveraging capacity. This organizational capacity can include creating community of practices or professional learning
groups; learning together to build knowledge. Both lend itself to the creation and improvement of collaborative learning (Sharratt & Planche, 2016). Kegan and Lahey (2009) caution that even the best efforts to change are blocked by what the authors call hidden commitments. A challenge within the problem of practice will be to attempt to unlearn the mental models of the “other group”. Without a doubt, the challenge for leaders is to clearly understand how to change processes so that the organization is positively impacted. Employing change models is critical for change to be impactful. Two change models are described in detail next.

**Change Models**

Ongoing change is an integral component of the educational landscape (Evans, Thorton, & Usinger, 2012). Recognizing that organizational change is complex and the significant need to understand people within organizations, leaders are faced with determining what conceptual theory fits best within their environment. Many educational leaders, especially school principals, seem to lack the understanding of the underlying theoretical structures associated with successful change (Evans, Thorton, & Usinger, 2012). Pollock, Fei, and Hauseman (2014) contend that this lack of understanding may be resulting from principals not having time to think and reflect on change due to their own work intensification and day to day workplace challenges.

Although Wood (2017) argues there is yet to be a perfect model for educational change, I believe my leadership approaches coupled with the CPM (Cawsey et al., 2016) and the Appreciative Inquiry Model (AIM) (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987) will drive change forward and support the implementation of the OIP’s problem of practice. My reasoning for using both models is twofold. Using the AIM will oversee a positive and collaborative approach to the change while the CPM offers a sequential framework to ensure the steps of the structured framework are addressed and supported. The pragmatic nature of both models aligns with my
leadership approach. It is also important to note that the models will only be effective when they are integrated into implementation planning.

These two models have many similarities. Both models are grounded in organizational change theory and provide guidelines for organizational change through frameworks (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987; Evan, Thorton & Usinger 2012). Both guide change through dialogue, organizational thinking and collaboration (Cawsey et al., 2016; Evan et al., 2012). They are predominantly posited within the human resource frame and possess a methodology of managing change. Additionally, both models have an understanding that an organization is concerned with constructing knowledge and social change (Burrell & Morgan, 1979; Scardimana & Bereitier, 2006) through their people and the belief that the capacity to change comes within the people of the organization. Both models are discussed below.

**Change Path Model (CPM)**

The stages of the CPM support organizational changes within a comprehensive framework. Within this model attention is given to the process of change with a focus on gaining acceptance of the change and positions the organization for success (Cawsey et al., 2016). My work will be to use the factors within the CPM to influence teachers in attaining the vision of the OIP’s problem of practice.

The CPM highlights four stages: awakening, mobilization, acceleration and institutionalization. The *awakening* stage identifies the need for change, articulates the gap in performance and develops a vision for change through a number of communication channels. Considering these elements, a significant first step would be to articulate the importance of the need for change. The need stems primarily from the “organizational and environment need” (Cawsey et al., 2016, p. 99) and reflective what the data consistently reveals. The *why* behind
the change brings about the moral purpose (Fullan, 2011) of an organization’s vision which translates into a commitment to raising the bar and closing to the gap. The moral purpose of this work is closing the gap between the current and future state of the organization.

The *awakening* stage of the CPM addresses the understanding of both internal and external environments of the organization. I have coined this first year of my work as the *year of discovery*. My intent is to discover and become familiar with the lay of the land at the school. For example, in my daily interactions with teachers, I listen to their concerns and make observations of their practices. My interactions are non-threatening but intentional. I see progress. At the beginning of the school year, I observed that teachers were not asking for help during my daily interactions with them. In the classrooms, I observed student behaviour issues, that in my view, were disruptive to the classroom environment. When I raised concerns about my observations and my desire to help, the teachers were surprised as support was rarely initiated in the past. As a recent example, my concerns and ensuing response leveraged three additional educational assistants to support teachers in three primary classrooms of my school.

The *mobilization* stage explores the desired change through a system wide approach and through supporting the change recipients. Within this stage consideration will be given to the stakeholders: the district, the principal and the teachers. It will also consider the readiness level of the recipients of the change, in this case the teachers. The mobilization stage determines what specifically needs to be changed and will encompass findings of Nadler and Tushman’s (1989) Congruence Model (CM) in which an analysis of the current state can be identified. This stage embraces the participation of stakeholders in the change process. The importance of building trust within this stage is critical to the OIP’s problem of practice’s desired outcome.
The acceleration stage supports building the momentum of the change through the engagement and empowerment of the recipients. This stage will also include building relationships and trust with and among the teachers as the recipients of the change. In this stage change comes to life where plans are in place and the implementation of the problem of practice begins. During this stage, strategies are used to support the implementation and new knowledge, skills and abilities are developed (Cawsey et al., 2016). I recognize that most of my work will unfold within this stage. The work will include building relationships through frequent teacher interactions, creating a leadership team to mobilize knowledge, and communicating the vision to the school community. Chapter three will explore these concepts.

The institutionalization stage examines how the change has transformed the organization. It allows the leader to monitor changes and make any needed changes through feedback. The institutionalization stage is where the change becomes embedded in the organization’s culture. It is identified by Schein (2010) as the way an organization functions. This final stage will ultimately see a successful implementation of the OIP’s problem of practice. The implementation of these four stages will be the focus of chapter three. The AIM, discussed next, will serve to compliment the CPM with the implementation of the OIP’s problem of practice.

Appreciative Inquiry Model (AIM)

Cooperrider and Srivastva (1987) contend that change comes about through collaboration and the people within an organization being participatory in problem solving. It also has a “focus on inquiring as to the best of what is in order to imagine what could be” (p. 27). The AIM involves the assumption that organizations are living systems where people within an organization see themselves as having strengths (Barrett & Fry 2008). The model also has a
focus on taking a positive approach in solving problems and working on how to enhance organizations.

The AIM’s framework uses a cycle of four processes: discovery, dream, design and destiny (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987). These processes facilitate the work of enhancing what already exists within an organization. More specifically and in terms of the OIP’s problem of practice the teachers’ desire to build trust with me as their principal will be a focus. The model’s strength-based approach will oversee the stages of the CPM.

Hargreaves, Boyle, and Harris (2014) speak to the underpinnings of inspiring and uplifting people within organizations. The authors contend that organizations thrive on good feelings and feed off positive results. These concepts are found within the AIM and often are forgotten within education organizations. I believe the AIM will help support building collaborative practices within my school. The AIM is used as a positive and optimistic influence throughout the change process. Although important, being positive and optimistic will not necessarily bring the implementation of the change to fruition. A limitation of the AIM is that it lacks the structure needed to direct and action elements of implementation which is necessary to bring about the desired change. Figure 1 shows pictorially how the AIM overlaps the CPM.

*Figure 1. Appreciative Inquiry Model overlapping stages of the Change Path Model*
Critical Organizational Analysis

A critical organizational analysis of the OIP’s problem of practice has been undertaken due to a gap between the vision and goals of the district and the school in question. The district’s vision focuses on the teachers collaborating to improve instructional practice. The district leadership team is clear in its messaging that collaborative practices need to be visible in schools. This vision, however, is presently not reflected in my school; hence the OIP’s problem of practice. Cawsey et al. (2016) contend that it takes more than just unsatisfied senior leaders to bring about change; unsatisfied employees as recipients of the change will ultimately bring success or failure to the change initiative. The teachers as recipients of the change and primary stakeholders will ultimately decide the success of the change. I predict, for the most part, the change will be positive.

In the past, the teachers had to yield to a traditional hierarchal structure where the administrative team managed the operations, structure and instruction of the school. Additionally, in the past, the administrative team made all decisions pertaining to classroom teaching assignments, elementary class lists and secondary course offerings. In this structure, no collaboration is evidenced. In my year of discovery, I continue to listen to teachers and be responsive to their needs. For example, I have been strategic through my daily walk-abouts and interactions to make sure teachers feel that they are being heard and listened to. Although I still have much to learn about the teachers, I do believe that my leadership approach along with the CPM and the AIM will help support the implementation of the OIP’s problem of practice.

I am new to this school and a focus on building relationships with teachers will be critical to the success of the OIP’s problem of practice. Developing trust with the new vice-principal and the curriculum coaches who will be integral in helping leverage this change is equally important. Albeit, my strength in building relationships will be one of the most important factors
underpinning any leadership approach that I might adopt in achieving the outcomes of the problem of practice.

Bolman and Deal (2013) point out that a leader who employs leadership within a singular frame or perspective is not usually successful. Organizations are complex and dynamic and when change is required, a multi-framed approach to leading change is needed. Leaders of organizations need to have a tool box that reflects a plurality of approaches and their underlying theories. Within this context, the CPM coupled with positive findings of the AIM will support the implementation of the proposed change. Additionally, the CM (Nadler and Tushman, 1989) will help determine the specific gaps that need to be addressed for successful implementation of teacher collaboration with an outcome of enhancing professional learning.

Although successful organizational change requires attention to process, as identified in the CPM, it cannot be underestimated that organizational change also requires a leader to pay close attention to the content of the change. The CM, which is examined in detail below, will allow for consideration to be given to what specifically needs to be changed (Cawsey et al., 2016).

**Utilizing the Congruence Model**

Cawsey et al. (2016) contend that a diagnosis of where the organization is in the present moment is needed in order to determine a future direction. Similarly, Napier, Amborski, and Pesek (2017) suggest that change readiness prior to transformation projects provides an organization with advanced understanding of the areas where change is needed. Further, Napier et al. (2017) suggest that understanding the organization in anticipation of a change will support the implementation process of the change plan.
The CM is based on the principle that an organization’s performance is derived from four fundamental elements. They are as follows: tasks, people, formal and informational organization (Cawsey et al., 2016). The model suggests that when all elements are aligned the organization will perform to its capacity (Cawsey et al., 2016). In terms of the OIP’s problem of practice, the hope is that once the problem is diagnosed and strategies put in place, organizational coherence will result. From the model, inputs are transformed through the transformation process through to outputs. The alignment of these processes will support a successful change initiative. A description and their effect on change are described below.

**Input**

Within the *input* stage three components (environment, resources and history) provide sources of data to support the transformation stage of the CM.

In terms of the environment, consideration will need to be given to the employees, as stakeholders, as well as the organization’s social factors and policies. For example, a review of the teachers’ collective agreements and board policies would fall within this component. Additionally as an example, in order to develop trust and build relationships, I would avoid scheduling meetings during preparation times, before or after school and during teachers’ uninterrupted lunch periods. I have begun the process of developing trust and building relationships early in the school year and the early results are positive. Teachers are demonstrating to me in their words and actions that they are willing to share their concerns as well as their successes.

An organization’s resources include its employees as well as its financial assets and budgets. When attempting to have teachers come together to discuss best practices during the instructional day supply teachers are needed to replace teachers in their classrooms. Although
financially it is within the school budget to replace teachers, there is a shortage of supply teachers which results in limited opportunities to collaborate. Making a decision not to schedule meeting times before or after school and during preparation times (environment element) has resulted in limited teacher team meetings due to supply teacher shortage.

In terms of history, there is considerable evidence that the way an organization functions is influenced by past practices. This would include behaviour of leaders, responses to crisis situations and the evolution of beliefs and values (Cawsey et al., 2016). There has been a number of significant changes to the school organization that adds to its history and impacts its current state. As an example, for many years the school was supported by three administrators, one principal and two vice-principals. One vice-principal was responsible for the elementary panel and the other was responsible for the secondary panel. Due to decreased enrolment four years ago, the district eliminated one vice-principal position. The school was left with one vice-principal and one principal; both of whom had a secondary background. The district’s decision negatively impacted both secondary and elementary staff but the elementary panel was significantly more affected particularly due to its loss of the elementary vice-principal. The decision by the district board to eliminate a vice-principal position resulted in discontented and frustrated teachers.

The Input stage has allowed me to reflect on the processes that are already in place within the school and other considerations that continue to make an impact on my decision-making as I move forward with the implementation of my problem of practice.

The next stage within the CM is called the Transformation process. The four elements of this stage will eventually produce strategies to support the outputs of problem of practice. The
elements of the transformation process are reviewed and discussed in detail in the following section.

Transformation Process

The tasks within the Transformation process is considered a basic and inherent activity of the organization. As outlined in the problem of practice, the task is defined as building a culture of collaboration among teachers. With this in mind, understanding the nature of the task, predicting the work flow of the task and anticipating the required acknowledge and skills all need consideration (Cawsey et al., 2016). In consideration of my task of actioning the OIP’s problem of practice, I will need to remind myself that building a culture takes time and effort. Within my year of discovery, I continue to build relationships and make observations. I recognize that trust was lost with teachers with the previous administrators but I can see that it can be regained with intentional and purposeful leadership approaches—listening to teachers, being visible in the hallways and classrooms and letting teachers know their practice is important and valued. I also recognize within the task that my work flow may be misaligned. Spending time with teachers in the classroom will take me away from the management of the school in terms of dealing with policies and procedures.

The teachers are the recipients of the desired change. Through this analysis it will be determined which teachers support the change and which teachers resist it. It was acknowledged at the beginning of the school year through teacher one-on-one interviews that there are many teachers ready for change but there are others that prefer the status quo. I know this through the one-to-one teacher interviews. Teachers ready for the change will need to be supported; listening and attending to their needs is critical. I will need to accept that change is not possible without people ready to change themselves (Mento, Jones & Dirndorfer, 2002).
Formal structures are part of the Transformation process and these structures include the use of policies and procedures. Consideration will be given to teachers’ assignments and their comfort in their knowledge of curriculum and classroom management within the school. From what I have observed many of the teachers have been placed in assignments that they have not asked for. They were not part of a consultation process in terms of their assignment or classroom make-up. Involving the teachers in this process is significant in building trust. Culture is considered an informal structure and, as previously mentioned, a by-product of leadership and organizational history. Lumby and Foskett (2011) contend “reflecting on culture may provide a helpful way of getting a broad picture and understanding the overall characteristics, categories and groups of those we work with” (p. 452). In terms of overall teacher characteristics, working in isolation and not participating in professional development were part of the norm of the school. Acknowledging the importance of organizational culture and having a deep understanding as to where the school once was (collaborative), its current state (non-collaborative) and where it wants to go (collaborative) will help develop the strategies needed for implementation.

Output

The output of an organization is related to the mission of the organization’s goals, the satisfaction of the staff as well as the growth within the organization (Cawsey et al., 2016). The success of the organization’s goals should be monitored. Feedback of performance should be timely and precise. During this school year, I will be seeking feedback on the shared vision through teacher surveys. The surveys will enable me to determine how the new vision is being perceived by the teachers and how administration can further support them. A number of years ago I distributed a similar survey to my teaching staff and it provided me with rich information.
about the needs of the teachers. The output stage helps measure the institutional stage of the CPM in terms of sustaining the vision.

Briefly, acknowledging and understanding the findings of the input stage, along with developing strategies from the transformation process stage and measuring the success of the problem of practice through the output stage of the CM, together, will support the successful implementation of the problem of practice.

And finally, a transformational leader that utilizes predominantly a human resource lens in building relationships coupled with employing evidence based research frameworks, including the CPM, the CM and the AIM that diagnose, analyse, guide and inspire a vision of change will ultimately mobilize the problem of practice. Three possible solutions to support the mobilization of the OIP’s problem of practice is explored in the next section.

Possible Solutions to Addressing the Problem of Practice

A highly effective leader is one that is attune to and understands the environment in which he/she is operating and employs a combination of theories and approaches to achieve the desired results. Fundamental to this thinking is the ability to understand issues at hand for without knowing what is present and how it came to be one cannot lead successfully. That said, in my extensive review of the literature, both the CM and the CPM have provided me the insight into analyzing possible solutions to my problem of practice. For example, the CM enabled me to better understand the dynamics of the new school environment and enabled me to conceptualize the readiness level of the recipients of the desired change. My leadership approaches as they align with my core values has also enabled me to be reflective on possible solutions. After an extensive review, I have determined three possible solutions to the OIP’s problem of practice as explained in the following section.
Solution One: Status Quo Leadership Approach

Based on my previous successful experiences of improving staff moral and student achievement, I have been assigned to KS school by the district leadership team. In terms of the status quo solution, the question that will be explored is whether the assigned new leadership change will result in the desired change. In other words, based on my twenty years of experience as a principal coupled with my fundamental values and beliefs of leadership, will the OIP’s problem of practice be successful?

My dominant approach to leading has always been to support and guide people. I have also always appreciated the managerial duties that come with being a principal. Focusing on people and being task driven have contributed to my success as a principal.

In terms of my managerial accountability, one part of my success has stemmed from my use of the practices outlined in the Ontario Leadership Framework (2013) (OLF) and the School Effective Framework (2013) (SEF). These frameworks serve as exemplary evidence based indicators and when utilized, make significant impact on educator leadership. Both frameworks have structured my thinking of what needs to be done for teachers to improve their practice. In consideration of the OLF, I have consistently focused on building relationships, developing people and developing the organization to support desired practices. The SEF has enabled me to focus and emphasize my efforts as a school leader through collaborative instructional practices to strengthen teaching and learning. I agree with Bush and Glover (2014) who found that managerial leadership is necessary as organizational tasks are required to be carried out for an organization to be efficient and effective.

The operational tasks outlined in the OLF and SEF are embedded in my practice and have contributed to my success in managing and leading. The transactional leadership practices
such as leveraging teacher performance and securing accountability, although important, will be somewhat muted during the implementation stage due to the focus of supporting collaboration among teachers.

Additionally, in terms of my leadership approach, I have always led by serving, supporting and guiding others. Throughout my career my mantra has been *doing whatever it takes;* supporting people within an organization to grow and learn. This vision has helped me build trusting relationship with the people with whom I work. Tschannen-Moran (2001; 2014) in her research identified that trust is the key element of organizational culture and that a high level of trust improves student achievement. Tschannen-Moran (2014) also determined that if there is a high level of trust among people within the school there will be a high level of collaboration. Collaboration among teaching staff in my former schools was job embedded and *a way of being.* This stems mostly in part from building relationships by being visible in the hallways and classrooms and listening to and addressing teacher concerns.

Throughout my career I have been proud of having leveraged the capacity of teachers who have been appointed to formal leadership positions. Margaret Wheatley’s (2006) work (cited in Hargreaves et al., 2014) measured success through the contributions an individual has made to his or her fellow human beings. Contributing to the professional growth of others develops people within the organization and supports my leadership beliefs.

My leadership characteristics of developing trust, having a strong knowledge and understanding of problem solving and maintaining confidence when faced with challenges have also contributed to my success as a principal and are evidenced in my 360 Degree Leadership Assessment. Additionally, my practice has always been one to seek feedback. Kouzes and Posner (2012) contend “you cannot learn very much if you are unwilling to find out more about
the impact of your behaviour on the performance of others around you” (p. 85). Initiating a 360 Degree Leadership Assessment demonstrated my willingness to learn and grow as a leader.

Attending to the management of the school, supporting people, seeking feedback from others and *doing whatever it takes* has brought me success in building capacity among teachers with a direct result in improving student achievement. One example of this success was evidenced through a formal recognition from the Director of Education of the significant increase in EQAO cohort scores. In my new school, I have already seen changes. Teachers are asking questions, they are inquiring about resources, classroom environments, and are energized about rebuilding a culture of collaboration. It appears they are feeling less isolated in their work and less discontented. In my short time, resources have been ordered, supports have been put in place to enhance classroom environments, and many team meetings have taken place with the intention of improving the instructional program.

Employing the status quo of my leadership approach to this solution would include using my past successes as a leader to continue to build relationships with teachers to support the problem of practice.

From the outset, it does appear that the change in leadership, me, as the new principal may be making an impact. However, I do recognize there are limitations to this status quo leadership approach solution. As the principal of KS, I am responsible for leading and managing two schools- an elementary and a secondary school. Although very knowledgeable, my vice-principal has recently come from the teaching role and thus has limited administrative experience. From a resource standpoint, leading and managing both schools along with attempting to build relationships may not be sustainable. Focusing on building relationships with the teachers and other staff members has already taken me away from important managerial tasks
such as hiring staff, attending to discipline matters, and responding to parents in a timely manner. These worries should not be surprising. According to Pollock et al. (2014) principals across the province are faced with similar challenges. The researchers have also concluded that the majority of principals find their work to be grounded in structure and compliance.

I do believe this solution is viable in part, however, an emphasis on building trust among teachers may result in managerial mishaps as my capacity for doing whatever it takes will be stretched and as a result not sustainable. Additionally, Cawsey et al. (2015) argue that leaders should not rely on past successes as they risk failing to develop an “organization capacity to adapt to a changing environment” (p. 103). As Solution One does rely on past successes, I would argue this solution is only partially sustainable.

**Solution Two: Principal Directed Approach**

As the new principal, directing the OIP’s problem of practice aligns itself with a structure of hierarchy and controls (Bush & Glover, 2014). The underpinning of this structured approach includes keeping order, managing specific skill sets and ensuring a level of accountability within the school. In part, my task would be to set required meetings (days, times and frequency) and direct teachers on how to rebuild a culture, how to collaborate and how to improve their instructional practice.

I am a person who adheres to structure and hierarchy; both of which are prominent in the field of education. This hierarchical solution may be agreeable to teachers who want principals to lead as the expert. Certainly, some teachers still prefer to be told what to do.

Directing teachers on what to do and when to do it is one possible solution, however, it is not a solution that fits within my leadership approach. It actually goes against everything I
believe. My leadership approach is one that supports people and builds capacity through developing trust and building relationships.

This solution is in direct conflict with the fundamental beliefs of building collaboration, that of building trust. Leithwood and Jantzi (2005) point out in their research that trust is a precondition for productive collaboration. Further, Tschannen-Moran and Gareis (2015) found that in order for principals to lead effectively, the element of trust needs to be present and it begins with principals being transparent and empowering staff. Hence, a single person directing this problem of practice is not a viable option.

**Solution Three: Professional Learning Communities Approach**

The district’s vision speaks to teachers working collaboratively and sharing best practices. More specifically the district embraces the vision of collaboration among teachers and developing best practices to consistently improve student achievement (Strategic Plan, 2017). The school data shows collaboration among teachers has been lost. Leading from the bottom-up through a learning community is the third viable solution which could support the outcome of the problem of practice.

A learning community is “a group of people that act on an ongoing basis to develop their knowledge of a common interest or passion by sharing individual resources and by engaging in critical dialogue” (Dooner, Mandzuk & Clifton, 2008, p. 265). A learning community embraces a distributed leadership approach where leadership is found to be shared (Leithwood, Mascall & Strauss, 2009). In other words, a learning community can be described as a group motivated by a shared vision who supports one another interdependently. A learning community will be identified as a professional learning community (PLC) within this third solution.
Creating PLCs at KS would provide for the rebuilding of trust among teachers. It would also support me as the principal in building trust with teachers. Hallam et al. (2015); Tchannen-Moran (2001, 2014), and Dooner et al. (2008) contend that trust is at the center of highly effective learning communities. High levels of trust allows for a culture to challenge each other, deprivatize classrooms and share concerns. Bryk and Scheider’ work (2004) cited in Hallam et al. (2015) contend that the role of the principal is to distribute influence over school decisions and to resist any type of micromanaging of the PLC.

This solution would allow teachers to set goals, make decisions and feel empowered (Mintzberg, 1994). The move towards creating a PLC serves as taking control away from the principal and transferring the control to the PLC members. Hargreaves et al. (2014) suggest that “distributed influence and shared decision making affect trust among teachers and create and sustain a positive school culture” (p. 11). My role in distributing influence and encouraging shared decision making and being a co-learner in the process will ultimately make the difference in creating a culture of continuous improvement and sustain improved achievement (Hargreaves et al., 2014).

Although this third solution is sound, there are barriers to its implementation. Dooner et al. (2008) argue that learning communities are not sustainable due to a lack trust, time and talent among group members. Rebuilding trust among teachers and with teachers would take much time and effort. Dooner et al. (2008) go on to say that even when trust is present learning communities inherit a large source of interpersonal tension which begins to be unproductive if trust is not restored.

Learning is at the center of a PLC. However, despite its positive intentions, Argyris and Schon (1996) argue that people often misperceive themselves and their learning and as a result
there is a lack of deep learning within the PLC. PLCs need direction in terms of translating the conversations into action and improved practice. Katz et al. (2016) structured a Next Best Learning Moves protocol to support a focus on learning, however, the principal cannot be perceived as micromanaging such a protocol within the non-hierarchal structure of the learning community.

And finally, although there are financial resources available to implement the OIP’s problem of practice in releasing teachers from the classroom there is a lack of personnel resources to support teachers in their absence. For example, when teachers are participating in PLCs there are often times no supply teachers available to replace them in the classroom. This is an important limitation that needs consideration.

**Conclusion of Proposed Solutions**

After an in-depth review of the literature and reflecting upon the various factors with my school environment, I believe that Solution Three, creating learning communities along with Solution One, status quo leadership approach, will bring the desired outcome to the problem of practice.

I do believe that Solution One would be successful over time but there is a risk that I would get distracted with the increase of accountability in management placed upon me. I believe leveraging teachers’ capacity to come together in learning communities with purpose and intent is required to bring success to the problem of practice. Hattie (2015) contends that working together to maximise the effect of teaching through collaboration is critical in improving student learning.
Combining the two solutions will bring equilibrium back to the district’s goals but more importantly it will also bring attention to the ethical obligations of the district. These ethical obligations are explored below.

**Leadership Ethics and Organizational Change**

School principals make many decisions everyday; whether big or small consideration and attention needs to be given to what is right based on the values and beliefs of the organization. This care and attention equate to principals acting ethically and as moral agents of their schools.

**Ethical Leadership**

Ehrich, Klenowshi, Smeed and Spina (2015) contend that ethical leaders are “people who act fairly and justly and are viewed as caring, honest and principled persons” (p. 5). Northouse (2016) states that ethical leadership is concerned with leaders as people and what they do to achieve desired goals while applying a strong ethical stance.

Angus (2010) cited in Cherkowski et al. (2015) points out “moral agency is a person’s ability to make moral judgements based on some commonly held notion of right and wrong, to do so on behalf of others, and to be held accountable for these actions” (p. 3). Principals are moral agents and are expected to “establish and sustain a moral and ethical climate” (Cherkowski et al., 2015 p. 2). In my role as moral agent paying attention to and being disciplined about values and ethics is critical especially when it comes to working with teachers.

**Moral Agency and Transformational Leadership**

Moral agency is very closely aligned with the transformational leadership approach which is my dominant leadership approach within this problem of practice. Moral agency and transformational leadership are both enacted through trusting relationships with the goal of attaining a higher ground. Cherkowski et al. (2015) contend that “transformational leaders tap
into the highest needs of their followers and engage in a mutually stimulating relationship that can result in social change through moral leadership” (p. 5).

The focus of the implementation of the OIP’s problem of practice will be to explore research-based theories on how to create trusting relationships, a critical element in enhancing collaborative practices among teachers. The implementation will also highlight the ethical obligations and tensions that effect change when working with teachers.

For example, as a transformational leader and moral agent my ultimate goal for teachers is to support them to think beyond their classroom and their own self-interests. I realize this is a very optimistic goal, however, it does align with a moral and ethical school climate.

**Moral Agency and Change**

Change is the desired outcome of this problem of practice. Lewin (1992) cited in Burnes (2009) argues that change stems from “common sense, applying hard work diligently and over time” (p. 366), however, most significant to his work is the contention that change will not occur without implementing “democratic participation in decision making” (p. 366). Lewin’s theory supports the implementation of PLCs as its underpinnings are democratic and participatory in nature.

Most teachers at KS have demonstrated a readiness for change. However, there are still teachers who lag in their readiness for change. This other group would need to change on its own volition; which itself is ethically based. In that sense, it would be naive of me to think there will not be ethical tension if I attempt to influence this other group when implementing the OIP’s problem of practice. These ethical tensions are discussed below.
Starratt’s Ethical Framework

Starratt’ (1994) work cited in Cherkowski et al. (2015) contends there are three ethical approaches that leaders should acknowledge and understand when leading. They are identified as an ethic of care, an ethic of critique and an ethic of justice. Upon reflection each ethical approach is addressed in some way within the problem of practice.

The **ethic of care** approach is focused on relationships and taps into the virtues of respect, love and regard for others (Ehrich et al., 2015). Within the OIP’s problem of practice this ethical approach can easily align itself with both the acceleration and mobilization stages of the CPM. These two change stages focus on people and relationships. In building relationships with people, a leader needs to be honest and trustworthy; qualities of a moral agent. In my work of implementing this problem of practice I will focus on supporting and serving people. However, it would be naive of me to think a singular focus would not bring about ethical tensions. For example, a single focus on people will without a doubt distract from my accountability to the managerial issues I must address as principal in my school.

The **ethic of justice** approach aligns itself with the principles of natural justice and human dignity (Enrich et al., 2015). This approach requires “leaders to reflect on current policies and practices so that they may uncover injustices that may be embedded in social structures” (Cherkowski et al., 2015 p. 4). This approach would fall within the awakening stage of the CPM where it is identified that change is needed. An example of the ethic of justice approach surfaced within the district when the district leadership team determined that the practices of KS did not align with the district’s vision, resulting in “injustice of the social structure” (Cherkowski et al., 2015 p. 5). More specifically such an injustice negatively affected the staff moral and student
achievement. To rectify the injustice new leadership was assigned to KS, myself as the principal and a new vice-principal.

The *ethic of critique* approach brings with it leaders who challenge and question the actions of others, specifically those “who do not appear to act in accordance with the ethics of fairness or equity” (Ehrich et al., 2015, p. 8). Last spring, I was faced with a decision to change assignments. I was hesitant as I did not want to leave my current assignment. I questioned the intent of the change in assignment. With time and upon reflection, I accepted the assignment and as Ehrich et al. (2015) suggest I turned towards the system and embraced the new assignment being asked of me. I first questioned and critiqued the fairness of the change. However, I came to recognize that as a moral agent of the district it is my duty to acknowledge and be responsive to what is in the best interest of the organization and not what is best for me. As a transformational leader, I have come to recognize that the district’s needs trump my own individual needs.

**Conclusion of Ethics**

Burnes (2009) contends that achieving ethical behaviour is difficult. Cherkowski et al. (2015) further suggest that ethical preparation and continued development of ethics are necessary to lead as moral agents in serving and supporting others.

I have been tasked with rebuilding a culture of collaboration among teachers. In my review of the literature on leadership ethics I recognize that the implementation of the OIP’s problem of practice will include ethical dilemmas. I am confident that my leadership approach to my work is the reason for my success as principal. This, coupled with creating a community of learners at KS, is the ethical and right thing to do. The successful implementation of this problem of practice will produce a new culture that promotes collaboration.
Chapter Summary

This second chapter explored the importance of gaining a clear understanding of the problem that underlies the need for change. Katz, Dack and Malloy (2018) noted that an in-depth understanding of a problem is critical to the success of any change initiative. The chapter also identified two change models that will support the implementation of the OIP’s problem of practice. The CPM and AIM both bring strengths to leveraging the collaboration of teachers. The chapter identified that the AIM brings a collaborative approach to the implementation, while the CPM explored a sequential and structured framework to the change initiative. The chapter also explored the content of the change through the CM and its fundamental elements. The chapter investigated three possible solutions and two of them were determined to be appropriate for implementation—status quo leadership and professional learning communities. And lastly, the chapter explored important issues of ethical leadership and its impact on the success of change initiatives. In chapter three a thorough examination of the change implementation plan, monitoring and evaluation and a plan to communicate the OIP’s problem of practice will be presented.
Chapter 3: Implementation, Evaluation & Communication

In this first section of chapter three, the goals of the change plan, most notably building relationships and creating PLCs, will be explored through the AIM, CPM, OLF and my own leadership approaches. The second section of this chapter will discuss the challenges, limitations and issues arising from the change.

Change Implementation Plan

A comprehensive review of the literature focusing on leadership and change theories was undertaken to ensure this change is implemented using evidenced based research. The review found that the AIM, the CPM and the OLF would best support and guide this change because of their alignment with collaborative principles as well as my own leadership values.

The AIM places emphasis on positive and appreciative aspects of any change plan. More specifically, within the implementation stage of the AIM, known as the design stage, the vision for the change is considered a blueprint for renewed outcomes. Additionally, the design stage creates an appreciative plan that highlights positive energy, a commitment to improvement and one that honors and nurtures an organization’s core values (Cawsey et al., 2016). In terms of the OIP’s problem of practice, my leadership values of respecting, valuing and engaging others will bring positive energy to the appreciative plan. The renewed outcome within the design stage will be the successful creation of a culture of collaboration among teachers.

The acceleration stage of the CPM supports the implementation of the vision and is coined the “do it” stage. The CPM guides implementation through empowering others and developing new skills and new ways of thinking. In terms of the OIP’s problem of practice, the data collection at the school level and the findings of the gap analysis provided an understanding of how the
organization works and gave insight of what needs to be achieved. The change theory tenets of the CPM helped, in part, create the vision of the problem of practice.

Creating and believing in the vision through the AIM and the CPM change theories are critical to the OIP’s problem of practice’s overall success but equally significant is keeping the eye on the prize (Cawsey et al., 2016) through the micro management of details and tactics of the desired goals (Kang, 2015). The prize is the successful implementation of two desired goals, which are (a) building relationship and (b) creating PLCs. Appendix A entitled, Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation of Goals outlines specific micro strategies (Kang, 2015) that action the OIP’s problem of practice. Possible solutions along with the solutions’ challenges and actions are described in detail below.

**Possible Solutions and the Ontario Leadership Framework (OLF)**

Two combined possible solutions were proposed in chapter two to support the goals. They were identified as (a) status quo leadership approach and (b) professional learning communities approach.

In terms of creating a change implementation plan for goals, Kang (2015) suggests “managing change elements associated with implementation is twofold: involving both managing the implementation process and addressing the human factors” (p. 29). Focusing on details of the plan and attending to people’s needs in the change process are critical to its success. The two goals within this OIP’s problem of practice require both management of details and people. Both are discussed below.

A status quo leadership approach was highlighted as one of the possible solutions that would bring success to OIP’s problem of practice. This solution originated from my success as an experienced principal in improving student achievement through commitment to improvement and
my heightened interpersonal skills. Although my leadership approaches have brought past successes, Cawsey et al. (2016) caution leaders that “relying on strategies that have worked well in the past can become a complacency trap” (p. 234). That said, I would suggest that my practice of employing the OLF competencies at the school level avoids this complacency trap and enables me to lead effectively and, in the end, implement change initiatives with success. To ensure the practice is consistent, the vice-principal and I meet at the end of each week to discuss and reflect on our leadership challenges that are found within the OLF framework.

As the new principal, I was unfamiliar with the school structure, its operations and the staff. Before making any decisions for the upcoming year, it was important for me to become familiar with the school by developing the organization- a tenet of the OLF. Developing the organization began in August, 2018 with an initial review and analysis of the data. The data included EQAO results, student achievement results, class lists, timetables, staff qualifications, School Effectiveness Framework (2013) reports, one-on-one teacher interviews and conversations with teachers and staff. This information allowed for a comprehensive analysis of what goals needed to be created to ensure students were improving. Reviewing the data and spending time with people at the school allowed me to begin the process of building a foundation in order to achieve the school’s two priority goals.

Critical to fully embracing collaboration with teachers is an intentional focus on building relationships.

A principal sets the tone for his or her school. The principal’s values, attitudes, and behaviors have a significant influence on the culture of the school. If the school is going to reap the rewards of a trusting work environment, it is the principal’s responsibility to build and sustain trusting relationships (Tschannen-Moran, 2014, p. 254).
To this end, setting the tone and building relationships began in September, 2018 with the activity which I coined, Walking, Listening, Observing and Learning (WLOL). WLOL sees the vice-principal and I being highly visible in the hallways and classrooms and accessible to staff. Since September, 2018 this activity provided me with many opportunities to interact one-on-one with staff and in small informal settings each day.

Presently, the vice-principal and I continue the WLOL, however, as Year One (2018-2019) progresses, we are strategically spending more time with the grade two and grade nine teachers who will be directly involved in the PLCs in Year Two (2019-2020). This intentional focus will allow us to continue to build relationships and observe the teachers’ classroom practice. The skills of particular teachers, namely grade two and grade nine teachers, are the focus of the PLCs due to the low literacy scores in grade three and grade 10. The literacy scores included the data compiled from report cards, EQAO results, and reading records.

Since September, 2018 a number of other activities have been organized to help build relationships. These have included meet and greet activities, one-on-one interactions, small group informal meetings, and department head, division and staff meetings. The data collection through anecdotes of the WLOL, one-on-one interviews, conversations and meetings allowed for setting the direction of the shared vision of cultivating a culture of collaboration among teachers. The informal research data gleaned through WLOL indicated that most teachers thrive on trusting relationships, are willing to collaborate and have a very strong desire to improve their classroom practice. To this end, improving the instructional program of the OLF will be leveraged through collaborative work, more specifically by creating PLCs.

Tschannen-Moran (2014) contends “an atmosphere of trust holds promise for transforming a school into a vibrant learning community” (p. 125). Acknowledging that trust has been formed
through various activities since September, 2018 and has proven to be impactful through the data, a foundation has been set for creating PLCs.

The first step in creating PLCs is to create a PLC leadership team; one that will create a shared vision, mobilize knowledge, and build capacity. This PLC leadership team is currently being created (winter/spring of Year One) and will support the two division PLC teams in Year Two.

Sharratt and Planche (2018) point out, “The success of schools as learning organizations hinges on how well people can work together as they seek to build collective capacity and problem solve to improve student outcomes” (p. 26). In creating the PLC leadership team, thought and attention are placed on teachers who work well together and who believe in respecting, engaging and valuing other teachers. This focus is important as these teachers will be building capacity within the two division PLC teams in Year Two.

Kang (2015) suggests that “when an intended intervention is actually implemented each component of the intervention and its processes should be managed and guided” (p. 29). I have the responsibility of managing and guiding the right people to be part of the leadership team. This planning is a critical first step in building capacity for the two division PLC teams that will be created in Year Two.

Consideration is being given to the following teachers to make up the PLC leadership team: a primary and secondary literacy teacher, a primary special education teacher, a primary and secondary literacy teacher/coach and myself as principal. These teachers possess the skills and knowledge necessary to improve literacy. They are also intrinsically motivated to learn, interested in supporting others and will work well together.
Managing and guiding the creation of the two division PLC teams—grade two and grade nine teachers in Year Two may be somewhat problematic. The hope is to begin the focused attention on reading and demonstrating an understanding of different forms of texts a year prior to grade three EQAO and grade 10 OSSLT.

The grade three EQAO data and student achievement data demonstrated that knowledge of content and communication to express and organize ideas need significant improvement. In terms of grade nine students, they have also continued to struggle with reading comprehension as well as making connections to personal knowledge and understanding as evidenced by the OSSLT and student achievement data. It is important to note that the grade ten OSSLT test is a “must” pass in order for students to attain their secondary school diploma. Presently, KS has a pass rate of 70%, which is much lower than the provincial average.

In Year Two, the grade two and grade nine teachers will be invited to participate to be part of the division PLC team with an instructional focus on reading and comprehension through student work. These teachers will be considered the most impactful recipients of the change and as a result much care and attention will be given to their needs. Creating these division teams will be carefully thought out and planned (Kang, 2015). Being strategic in WLOL is one example. This would include spending more interactive time with teachers to continue to build trust. Another example is messaging the vision and communicating to the teachers that improving practice stems from a focus on student work and not classroom practice. The focus on student work during the PLC meetings eliminates the risk of teachers judging other teachers’ professional practice (Sharratt & Planche, 2016). Consideration will need to be made as to whether any of the teachers involved in the PLCs are part of the other group who preferred the status quo. Should
this be the case, one on one support to participate will be offered to these teachers and using subtle influence by me as a leadership strategy will be employed.

In Year Two, the goal is to employ the skills and knowledge of the PLC leadership team to support the division PLCs teams. This will include co-creating learning protocols and creating a question of inquiry based on student achievement data. The vision for the end of Year Two is to see evidence of improved instructional literacy practice through student work and a thriving PLC. A thriving PLC will require effective management. This concept is explored next.

**Managing PLCs**

The implementation of PLCs will require preparing people for change as well as managing the transition of the change. Past practice, as discovered through the data collection, seemed to indicate that professional development was perceived as an optional activity, teacher led without reference to research-based evidence, and when held, was scheduled outside of the instructional day. Clearly, all of this suggests that participating in PLCs will be a significant change in practice for teachers.

Kang (2015) points out that when managing change, attention needs to be given to people’s adaptation of change, attempting to reduce resistance to change and taking care of people’s concerns regarding the change. As the change agent, being cognizant of people’s needs during the transition is critical to the success of the change (Bolman & Deal, 2013).

Recognizing the importance of attending to people’s needs and emotions, being strategic in continuing to build trust with grade two and grade nine teachers in Year One and Year Two is vital. Tschannen-Moran (2014) contends that “when trust is high and teachers feel supported and affirmed by their principal, they are much more willing to make themselves vulnerable through teamwork and sharing with other teachers” (p. 141). Additional to this thinking and recognizing
that some teachers are vulnerable, communicating that student work will be at the center of the PLC inquiry rather than teacher practice, will continue to be an important message. It is significant to acknowledge that unless the recipients of change see themselves as valued members of the change process and see the benefit for their students, they will resist change (Cawsey et al., 2016). The challenges of implementation are examined in the next section.

**Implementation Issues**

The implementation of PLCs needs to be managed and guided. Cawsey et al. (2016) state “people need to devote time and effort to absorb the change and the implications that will unfold with the change” (p. 240). Knowing this, undoubtedly, there will be some challenges in building relationships and creating the PLC leadership team. However, the most significant challenges will stem from the teachers (grade two and grade nine teachers) involved in the division PLC teams because of their possible perceived commitment to participate. As the recipients of the change, they will ultimately bring success or failure to the change initiative; hence the importance of continuing to build relationships and the acknowledgement of small wins (Katz et al., 2018) or successes. Some of the challenges of creating and supporting the division PLC teams will include:

- releasing teachers during the instructional day with a limited number of supply teachers available;
- addressing teachers who are hesitant about release time due to their commitment of being in the classroom;
- attending to the readiness level of the change for individual teachers;
- attending to the relationship between the teachers themselves and the curriculum coaches;
- addressing the possible worry that the change is seen as an *add-on* to the teachers’ existing work;
attending to possibly new teachers to grade two and grade nine through transfers or retirements; and

- acquiring the appropriate resources to support literacy as well as supporting the PLC process.

Although challenges will present themselves, attending to peoples’ needs and focusing on the details of the implementation will certainly contribute to the positive momentum of creating the PLCs. Additionally, ensuring that continuous improvement is communicated and small wins acknowledged will help continue to build momentum. The positive nature of the AIM helps supports the concept of small wins, as it brings inspiration and energy to the work. The concept of small wins will be discussed further in this chapter.

A change plan that focuses on building relationships and creating PLCs comes with limitations. It would be important to acknowledge that the work being done in building relationships in Year One and creating division PLCs in Year Two will indirectly impact school staff and my own work of attending to the management and operations of the school as its principal.

Kang (2015) contends “a possible threat to change management is the notion of sub-optimization where fine-tuning one part of a system may cause a detriment to another part of the system” (p. 28). Because so much of my time will be strategic in building relationships, supporting the PLC leadership team and planning and guiding the creation of the two division PLC teams, I will be less invested in the other teachers and their needs. That said, the vice-principal and I have discussed that he will be able to support the concerns of these teachers when concerns or issues arise. Additionally, teachers acknowledge that they are also able to communicate their concerns to their department heads or division teacher representative.
Teacher autonomy and the desire to work independently is also a limitation to the implementation of this change as it would make collaborating very difficult. This is a concern primarily with the grade two and grade nine teachers who may feel pressured to participate in the division PLCs. Acknowledging small wins, continuing to communicate to the teachers that their work is valued, and that student work will be the focus of the division PLC teams’ literacy inquiry will be critical in overcoming teachers’ sense of vulnerability.

Change can create positive energy but it can also create confusion and challenges especially among the recipients of the change (Bolman & Deal, 2013). For the OIP’s problem of practice to flourish, a focus on the teachers’ needs as change recipients is critical. Second to this, is the need for the change implementation to be monitored, evaluated and communicated. These three concepts will be discussed in the following two sections.

**Change Process, Monitoring and Evaluation**

Dudar et al. (2017) contend that “to renew our schools, there is no quick fix and no single right answer to problems...to do the job requires knowledge-based research and a collective effort by all stakeholders” (p. 45). Employing evidence-based research knowledge and skills along with the collective effort of teachers will be critical to the success of the goals. The first goal focuses on building relationships to facilitate collaboration and the second goal speaks to improving the instructional program through the development of professional learning communities.

In order for these two goals to be met, a plan to monitor and assess the progress of implementation needs to be in place. Monitoring a change initiative supports the ongoing information that is observed and collected. It also provides opportunities for leaders to address unanticipated changes. Equally important, the evaluation of the change initiative through data collection and reflections of learning must be evident. The evaluation process supports
allocation of resource decisions, determines how to respond to issues and supports the learning within the change initiative (N.S. Report, 2011). The specific goals of the change initiative are discussed in detail below.

Goals as they relate to Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership will continue to be a focus in building relationships and creating PLCS. This approach will see a shift in culture from one where teachers work in isolation and are risk averse to a culture where teachers feel respected, engaged and inspired. A focus on the AIM will support these sentiments. This approach emphasizes building trust and capacity as part of the professional learning. An emphasis is placed on a high level of commitment to realize the priority goals as well as leadership being able to influence outcomes (Bush, 2015).

A transformational leadership approach to leveraging Goal One and Goal Two will focus on individual teachers’ needs with inspiration, passion, support, and commitment. This not only includes offering support, resources and time but also embraces setting a positive tone within the school. The underpinnings of the leadership approach will begin to build a culture that is characterized by collective responsibility for professional learning and a theme of continuous improvement. The transformational lens will be visible within each continuous improvement cycle.

More specifically, the implementation plan of Goal One will focus on building relationships with teachers by fostering mutual respect and engagement. This concept is highlighted within the OLF and is identified as an essential component to leveraging outcomes in all areas of professional learning.
Goals and the PDSA model

The implementation plan for Goal One and Goal Two will be supported by an evidenced based framework; the Plan, Do, Study and Act (PDSA) model. The PDSA model is an iterative four-step cycle that allows for learning to occur during the monitoring and evaluation of the change initiative (Pietrzak & Palisziewicz, 2015). The four step cycle addresses the following components:

- The Plan stage allows the leader to describe what needs to be accomplished in the change process. The implementation of the initiative begins at this stage;
- The Do stage allows for the change agent to carry out the planned change and collect and begin to analyze data;
- The Study stage examines the data and determines what was learned during the process; and
- The Act stage allows for the next learning to be reviewed. (Act Academy, NHS Improvement, nd)

This model allows for precision in guiding the development of monitoring and evaluating the continuous improvement cycle of the change plan. Caswey et al. (2016) point out that “any action for change needs to be rooted in a sophisticated understanding of how the organization works and what needs to be achieved” (p. 301). This sophisticated understanding was discussed in chapter two when the CPM and the AIM were both used to better understand the organization and support this change initiative. The continuous improvement PDSA model will be used when goals are being implemented into practice, monitored and evaluated.
As noted previously, the perceptual data, student achievement data, and school effectiveness reports were used as evaluative tools that prompted this change initiative and will be used as a starting point of the monitoring process.

**Goal One Building Relationships-The Plan Stage of the PDSA cycle**

The goal of building relationships with teachers originated from one-on-one conversations with teachers, the review of student achievement data, and ministry reports in September, 2018. The analysis of the data highlighted the need to build relationships and foster mutual respect. Cosner (2010) contends the importance of setting norms for interacting with staff in order to create trust. Cosner (2010) also points out that trust will eventually lead to collaboration among staff. With this in mind, as a new principal getting to know the teachers, having frequent interactions with them and building trust takes time and requires much attention. Through specific activities that will be discussed in the Do stage these actions will be monitored and evaluated. The activities will be closely monitored by the vice-principal and myself from September 2018 to June 2019.

**Goal One Building Relationships- The Do, Study and Act Stages of the PDSA cycle**

The Do Study Act stages will reflect the monitoring and evaluation of building relationships to facilitate collaboration (Goal One) through the WLOL.

In the Do stage the plan of implementing the WLOL will be put into action. The vice-principal and I monitor and evaluate the progress of Goal One through WLOL. During the WLOL activity, we walk the halls of the school, listen to teachers and make observations. The intended outcome is to build trust and fostering mutual respect with the teachers. During the WLOL activity, qualitative data through observations, conversations and anecdotes are gathered.
and reviewed. This data will give a sense of whether the teachers are beginning to feel comfortable in sharing their concerns with us.

In the Study stage the vice-principal and I test the validity of the plan and determine if the WLOL activity is making an impact and providing the appropriate venue to build relationships with teachers. We meet at the end of each day and discuss the findings of the WLOL activity. The review of the data showed that the WLOL activity made a positive impact with the teachers. The data findings have been overwhelmingly positive. One particular finding of the WLOL is that teachers are in the hallways before class interacting with each other. This is progress from the beginning of the school year. Another positive finding is that teachers are presently voicing their concerns about student behaviors and asking for support. These requests were not evident at the beginning of the school year.

The Act stage provides an opportunity to rethink strategies and learn from the review of data. This stage also allows for determining whether the activity brings about the change should be adapted or abandoned (Taylor, 2017). Teachers appear to value the vice-principal and I being visible and attentive to their requests. Although time consuming, we will continue the WLOL activity into the spring of Year One but will be more strategic as we will begin to focus on the teachers that will be part of the PLC teams. With WLOL being tested in a new cycle consideration needs to be given to Cosner’s (2010) findings that increasing the number of interactions naturally increase the likelihood that trust is developed. These increased interactions will be focused on the grade two and grade nine teachers as the year progresses. During the Study stage of the new cycle, being vigilant of the new WLOL strategy in terms of maintaining the level of trust will need attention.
In this Act stage, two unintended findings were observed. One was a lack of both personal and physical resources in a number of primary classrooms and a second was the acknowledgement that providing teachers with some autonomy during professional development days was extremely valued. Table 1.1 refers to the continuous cycle of improvement and leadership approaches in implementing Goal One.

Table 1.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PDSA</th>
<th>Plan Do Study Act</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goal One</td>
<td>Build Relationships (to Facilitate Collaboration)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transformational Leadership Approach</td>
<td>Focus on individual teachers and their needs using inspiration and passion - foster mutual respect and trust, engage staff to make decisions, praise exemplary practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicator</td>
<td>Ministry reports, conversations with teachers prior to the start-up of school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan</td>
<td>Build relationships with teachers to foster mutual respect and engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do</td>
<td>Walk, Listen, Observe, Learn (WLOL) activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study</td>
<td>Collect qualitative data through WLOL (conversations, observations)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Act</td>
<td>Strategically implement the WLOL activity into next term (January- June, 2019)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timeline</td>
<td>September 2018-June 2019 (Year One) September 2019-June 2020 (Year Two)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Goal Two Creating PLCs- The Plan Stage of the PDSA cycle

It is well researched that collaborative work among teachers improves professional learning and that “the leader who helps develop focused collective capacity will make the greatest contribution to student learning” (Fullan, 2016, p. 57). Additionally, it is well documented that a trusting relationship is the cornerstone of such work and that greater trust enables greater collaboration (Hallam et al., 2015; Tschannen-Moran, 2014). During the implementation of building relationships through the WLOL teachers have gained trust and respect the vice-principal and myself. Building relationships is fundamental to creating PLCs. This goal will continue, although more strategically throughout the year, as trusting relationships
provide a foundation for the beginning work of PLCs. This second goal stipulates setting
direction to improve the instructional program by creating PLCs.

My transformational leadership approach will influence the mindset of teachers and how
they think about their work, and hope that they envision learning together and creating a sense of
responsibility toward each other, to achieve something that is morally good. Sharatt and Planche
(2016) point out “moral and social purpose has never been clearer for all leaders” (p. 59).

From the data collected and analyzed during the monitoring and evaluation process of the
WLOL activity, there is strong evidence to suggest that teachers have a willingness to work
together and learn from each other. Capitalizing on this momentum needs to be actioned in a
timely fashion. It will be actioned and leveraged through creating PLCs.

Goal Two has been identified through various means- the WLOL activity, ministry
reports, and one-on-one conversations with teachers. The ministry reports specifically
recommended that the “expertise of teachers needed to be tapped into to improve collaborative
practices at the school level” (p. 9). This statement aligns with the research of the SEF (2013).
It points out that “sustaining an effective professional learning community requires teachers
working collaboratively to improve learning, and on holding themselves accountable for the kind
of results that fuel continued improvements.” (p. 26). Fullan (2011) further writes that
“improvement is more a function of learning to do the right thing in the setting in which you
work…” (p. 25). However, Fullan (2011) contends that there is limited opportunity for teachers
to engage in continuous learning. My hope for Goal Two is to provide multiple opportunities for
grade 2 and grade 9 teachers to improve their classroom practice through PLCs.

PLCs need to focus on developing capacity of teachers’ knowledge and skills to improve
professional learning practices (Sharratt & Planche, 2016). This structure also allows for
teachers to engage in deep reflective practice and moves away from the traditional practice of working in isolation. Katz et al. (2018) contend that purposeful planning is critical to the success of a PLC. They further suggest that “if the leader is not clear on the plan” then it will be difficult to assess and reflect on the learning. (p. 107). Dufour et al. (2004) stipulates that by doing the work the PLC itself will begin to develop capacity and with more effectiveness than spending the time preparing to become a PLC. In consideration of these beliefs and as previously identified a PLC leadership team is currently being created at the school. This team will build capacity among themselves and will support the learning of the two division PLC teams in Year Two.

**Goal Two Creating PLCs-The Do, Study and Act Stages of the PDSA cycle**

The Do stage will include a dual level approach to creating PLCs and it will also speak to various means of data that will be monitored to support improving the PLC work.

The dual level structured approach will see the vice-principal and I create a PLC leadership team at the school level in Year One and two division PLC teams - grade two and grade nine in Year Two. The PLC leadership team will include a primary teacher, a secondary teacher, a primary and secondary instructional coach and the principal. The members of the division PLC teams will include an instructional coach for the division, the grade level teachers-all grade two and all grade nine teachers and the principal and vice-principal. I will support the grade nine PLC team and the vice-principal the grade two PLC team. In Year Two the continuous improvement cycle will focus on the division PLC teams on an eight-week cycle. The PLC leadership team will be created in April 2019 and will begin their work in May, 2019.

Based on leadership and instructional expertise, I will choose a PLC leadership team whereby members have demonstrated a growth mindset and are collaborators (Sharratt & Planche, 2016). Once the PLC leadership team is chosen they will begin both the learning and
planning process of PLCs. They will meet and determine how best to build capacity for teachers’ professional learning based on data. This process will explore some of the following questions:

- why is it important to create a PLC;
- what are the roles, responsibilities and behaviours of PLC members;
- what will the implementation challenges be for the leadership team as well as the division PLCs that will be created in Year Two;
- how will capacity be created among teachers; and
- what does the student achievement data show about the areas that need to be improved and what needs to be monitored and evaluated?

These questions will help the PLC leadership team co-construct a shared vision of the PLC work.

Once the PLC leadership team meets and begins to establish a culture of inquiry through the above noted questions, they will then begin to set a direction for a shared vision and co-construct protocols or norms to support and guide their work. They will work through this process from April, 2019 until June, 2019 and be sufficiently prepared to support the division PLC teams starting in September, 2019.

The focused work and activities of the division PLCs meeting in September, 2019 will address the following: (a) re-visit the shared vision created by the PLC leadership team and the why behind the PLCs, (b) determine the teacher learning focus of the PLC work, (c) determine the student learning focus of the PLC work, and (d) decide on the next steps that will improve achievement. The next steps will be incorporated into classroom practice. Due to the decline in student literacy results, the work will be focused in the area of literacy development, specifically
reading comprehension, in both grade two and grade nine and will begin in September 2019 in Year Two of implementation.

The PLC’s instructional coach will document the key points from the division PLC meetings during the PLC meeting in Year Two. Both the vice-principal and I will make observations and listen attentively to the discussions of the division PLC teams. As part of the monitoring, the division PLC teams will have subsequent meetings to determine their impact. For example, they will revisit the shared vision, review the teacher and student foci and discuss the teacher learning move. This process includes a cycle of continuous improvement through close monitoring.

In the Study stage in Year Two the PLC leadership team will test the validity of the plan and determine if the division PLCs are making an impact on student learning. The leadership team will revisit the division PLC learning and impact in November, 2019. They will review meeting documentation, student achievement data, and anecdotes of classroom practice. Also, in the check stage in Year Two, the division PLC teams will assess the validity of their work through the impact of their own teaching practice and improved student achievement data. The vice-principal and I will monitor and evaluate the work through classroom visits and informal discussions and reflect on questions which probe how teacher practice has been changed.

The Act stage provides an opportunity to rethink strategies of implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the change initiative. In consideration of the evaluation of the data the following issues may need addressing: (a) additional resources needed to invest to maintain and expand the PLC work; (b) the absence of time during the school day to collaborate; (c) the limited number of supply teachers to replace the teachers participating in the division PLC teams, and (d) the level of teacher engagement in the process. Additionally, exploring how the
learning from the PLC has been transferred into teaching practice will be explored and monitored.

At the end of Year Two the teachers involved in division PLC teams will be surveyed as a summative evaluation. This evaluation will allow for next steps to be considered. The process of implementing the PLCs will continue until June 2020 with the hopes of becoming the norm in the 2020-2021 school year. Within the next planning year, it would be critical for the PLC leadership team to continue to learn more about PLC processes. The team will need to seek out the structure and processes that they feel works best for the teachers in the school. Table 1.2 refers to the continuous cycle of improvement and leadership approaches in implementing Goal Two.

Table 1.2

Overview of the PDSA and leadership approach of creating PLCs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PDSA</th>
<th>Plan Do  Study Act</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goal Two</strong></td>
<td>Creating PLCs (April 2019-June 2020)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transformational Leadership Approach</strong></td>
<td>Focus on the collective and move away from top-down hierarchal approach to create professional learning communities-model collaboration in professional learning sessions, encourage collaborative development of group processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Indicator</strong></td>
<td>Ministry reports, feedback from teachers, WLOL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Plan</strong></td>
<td>Creating PLCs leadership and division teams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Do</strong></td>
<td>Creating PLCs to improve the instructional program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Study</strong></td>
<td>Collect data after PLC meetings to determine next steps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Act</strong></td>
<td>Ensure learning is translated into the classroom/Using influence to ensure PLCs become a norm within the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time</strong></td>
<td>PLC leadership team April-June 2019 (Year One) Division PLC teams September 2019 (Year Two)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Goal One and Goal Two will be implemented and monitored using the PDSA cycle and transformational leadership will be the approach that guides the cycle through acknowledging small wins. Katz et al. (2016) coin this acknowledgment as “a steady application of a small
advantage” (p. 145). It highlights the concept that once a small win has been accomplished forces are set in motion that favor other small wins; the accumulation of small wins perpetuates transformative changes. For example, in terms of a small win at the beginning of the school year teachers were hesitant to talk about their students and supports that were needed in the classroom. As the WLOL continues, teachers are becoming more and more comfortable with sharing some of their concerns and asking questions about practice. As a result of these conversations additional support has been allotted to a number of classrooms. The WLOL has allowed for trust to be developed and small wins to perpetuate changes. The hope is for further transformative changes to occur as Goal One and Goal Two continue to be addressed.

**Plan to Communicate the Need for Change and the Change Process**

A review of a number of leadership and change theories will be explored in this section to support how to communicate the need for change and how to communicate the change process. For clarity, the objective of this section is to: (a) communicate to teachers why change is needed and (b) explore how the change will be communicated through the change plan.

**Leadership Approach to the Plan to Communicate**

Cawsey et al. (2016) contend that good communication is essential to mobilize support for change and to sustain enthusiasm and commitment within an organization. The CPM is the primary change theory of this OIP and within its four stages emphasis is placed on communication; particularly in the awakening and mobilization stages. Both stages underpin the notion that the absence of a communication plan brings doubt to a successful change process. Cawsey et al. (2016) outline their phases of communication: pre-change approval, creating the need for change, midstream change and celebrating change. Table 1.3 below outlines the essence of the communication plan within the four stages of the change process.
As the primary change agent within the OIP, how I implement and communicate change will stem from my values and leadership approach to change. This will include finding a balance of giving autonomy along with setting direction in leading. A leader who, understands context and is responsive, is more apt to produce desired results. However, ensuring accountability and structure will also be required depending on the situation presented before me.

As a leader, I believe building a foundation of trust by listening, being visible and optimistic begins the transformation of schools. Kouzes and Posner (2013) contend that “when making people aware they are part of something that raises them to higher levels of motivation

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phases of Communication of the OIP’s problem of practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pre-Change Phase</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior administration expressly committed to change; new leadership brought into KS with change mandate specifically to bring equilibrium back to the district.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: adapted from Cawsey et al. (2016)
and morality they begin to develop a belonging to something very special” (p. 122). My hope is that this thinking will affect the desired change.

**Communicating the Need for Change**

The creation of a communication plan is essential to the change process as it keeps people informed of the change through the dissemination of information. The plan also outlines the rational for the change and serves to keep the momentum of the change moving forward (Caswey et al., 2016). Of primary importance in any communication plan is the fact that the message needs to be clearly communicated and needs to reach the appropriate audience. In terms of communicating the message, as the principal at the first staff meeting in September, 2018, I reviewed the data that was collected in August, 2018 that caused concern- the low achievement scores of all students but most notably the grade three and grade nine literacy scores. Although the teachers will be the focused audience for now, the sphere of influence will widen as the momentum and the sustainability as the change process builds.

To support the vision of cultivating a culture of collaboration through a communication plan, I will explore a concept of discovery as a communication strategy. The year of discovery is presently, and will continue to be, an overarching communication strategy during the implementation of building relationships and creating PLCs. As an example, at the beginning of each staff meeting I begin by stating, “within this year of discovery I am noticing a positive change in…”

In order for me to lead effectively as the principal, I need to understand the people within the school. The CM analysis discussed in chapter two provided me with a clear understanding of the school environment, the resources, and the people. However, now having a better understanding of the school culture this year of discovery provides me with time and space to learn even more. Kouzes and Posner (2013) contend “the best leaders are highly attuned to
what’s going on inside themselves as they lead and what’s going on in others” (p. 86). The *year of discovery* is an intentional communication strategy that could be considered a midstream change phase (Cawsey et al., 2016) as it allows for teachers to ask questions about the change process.

Kouzes and Posner (2013) also acknowledge “that the best leaders understand that it’s not their personal idiosyncratic view of the future that’s important, it’s the aspirations of all their constituents that matter most” (p. 87). This *year of discovery* allows me the opportunity to be self-aware but more importantly be socially aware of the teachers and their roles within the school. This is an important consideration of the communication strategy and ultimately the teachers who are recipients of the change.

As a leader working to communicate the goals to stakeholders, consideration needs to be given to the following:

- spend time and attention wisely- effecting change through trust and collaboration;
- attention to language is critical- use words that help create the vision;
- ask purposeful questions- to engage the audience; and
- seek feedback- to encourage continuous improvement.

Employing the above four concepts to communicate the goals of the change will make the goals visible to teachers and other stakeholders as the change continues (Kouzes & Posner, 2013). Conveying a consistent message that a change is needed and communicating the change vision is equally important. Kouzes and Posner (2013) contend that expressing an organization’s “vision is one of the most difficult leadership skills” (p. 155). An effective leader will ultimately
need to practice this skill in order to bring success to the change initiative. I have been visioning
the change since September, 2018.

Katz et al. (2018) state that it “cannot be overemphasized, the importance of positive relationships for influencing learning and bringing about important changes to a school” (p. 44). Teachers look for leaders who demonstrate enthusiasm and a genuine belief in the capacity of others. The most effective communication strategy for gaining trust is through conversations (Kouzes & Posner, 2013; Cawsey et al., 2016).

Data collection and analysis helped to create a sense of urgency and reinforced the need for enhanced professional learning. It also provided an opportunity to message that change is necessary. This message should be one that also conveys a sense of enthusiasm and positivity. The AIM supports this stance. These sentiments will influence a willingness of teachers to support the change.

An expectation of the PLC leadership team will be to communicate the vision of the PLCs with passion and inspiration with their colleagues and at staff meetings. In terms of communicating the new PLC vision, the messaging would include the construct that the PLC process contributes to the professional growth of teachers, but more importantly, the collaborative work of teachers improves student achievement through a student work focus. Additionally, a message will be communicated that the PLC work is not an add on but job-embedded professional development that improves instructional practices. This messaging is significant to the success of the OIP’s problem of practice but equally important is modelling of the PLC work itself. It will be difficult to realize the desired goals if people do not believe in the vision.
In terms of structure, the PLC leadership team will be responsible for building capacity of the division PLC teams through face-to-face meetings in September, 2019. These meetings will take place during the instructional day and will be on an eight-week schedule. Between meeting dates grade two and grade nine teachers will be asked to post student work through social media such as google classroom, Twitter or Facebook. The intention of these posts is to inform other teachers and staff within the school as well as parents within the community of the impact of the PLC work. This communication will help build the momentum for the PLC process. Another example of building capacity is teachers being encouraged to post or blog their learning reflections.

A change is necessary in order for grade two and grade nine students to improve in literacy. The hope is this change will be effective through the PLC process in supporting teachers in their learning but also in communicating with others in the school and beyond that the change is impactful. Kouzes and Posner (2013) point out that to get extraordinary things done a community whether large or small needs to come together and rely on each other.

Next Steps and Future Considerations

The development of the OIP began with the understanding of myself as a leader, exploring change theories and frameworks to support the implementation of a needed change.

Inevitably, the vision of cultivating a collaborative culture through building relationships and creating PLCs, will take time. As the new principal, taking the time to best understand the readiness of the teachers as well as focusing on the implementation of Goal One and Goal Two, hopefully bring the change vision to fruition at the end of Year Two.

This year of discovery has allowed me to listen, observe and be responsive to teachers’ needs and questions. My discovery continues; to date the findings have confirmed for me that
change is needed. This year of discovery strategy has proved to be impactful. The results of a recent staff survey on staff wellbeing resulted in very positive anecdotal comments. These results were shared with the Director of Education.

In terms of next steps, building relationships will continue into Year Two, however, with more of an intentional focus on grade two and grade nine teachers. The message is clear with all grade two and grade nine teachers that division PLCs will begin in September 2019 with the support of the PLC leadership team. Although as Dufour et al. (2004) contend there has not been a change in practice without the challenge of conflict, acknowledging small wins for the grade two and grade nine teachers would hopefully minimize this potential challenge. Just recently, two small wins occurred in grade two and grade nine. These included renovations to primary classrooms, enhanced special education student support and additional resources for grade nine literacy. These small wins were prompted by my forward-looking approach (Kouzes & Posner, 2013) which resulted in seeking supports to improve programming. Without a doubt, these small wins will not only minimize a possibly implementation dip (Fullan, 2011) but they will also help build positive momentum for teachers moving into the PLC in Year Two.

As the change vision moves forward, being cognizant of the implementation dip is warranted, particularly in this circumstance where the adaptive nature of the problem brings about challenges. An implementation dip, coined by Fullan (2011), is defined as a dip in performance during organizational change. Fullan (2011) speaks to the importance of providing additional support during this time through additional resources. For example, I will be proactive to ensure that during reporting periods and parent-teacher interviews, extra support time will be provided to teachers in grades two and nine or during times the teachers experience
additional responsibilities there will be a reduced focus on the PLC work. Being proactive should minimize the affects of the implementation dip.

Currently, I am creating the PLC leadership team. In the fall of Year Two we will be creating the division PLC teams. In order for the division PLCs to understand the work and processes it is critical for the PLC leadership team to dig deep into learning about PLCs so that everyone is fully prepared to begin the division PLC work with confidence and enthusiasm in September 2019. This enhanced learning will include reading credible sources such as Whatever It Takes (Dufour et al., 2004), The Intelligent Responsive Leader (Katz et al., 2018) and Leading Collaborative Learning (Sharratt & Planche, 2016) and others.

Equally important for the leadership team will be to continue to review the student achievement data and explore classroom resources and technology inventory to determine what student resources will be required to support teachers involved in the grade two and grade nine PLC. Additionally, including professional development for teachers to ensure students are appropriately accommodated in literacy.

Next steps will also include a more intentional WLOL. Sharratt and Planche (2018) coin learning walks and talks as a “systematic, non-evaluative approach to knowing what is happening in classrooms and in the school” (p. 29). The WLOL has been impactful and gave me the opportunity to build relationships with the teachers. However, moving into the spring, 2019 and being prepared for Year Two, learning more about a defined protocol to enhance the WLOL will benefit learning. The protocol would include visiting grade two and grade nine classrooms and speaking to the students about their work. This is something that I would like to further explore moving into Year Two. Communication to families of the change vision will also commence in Year Two.
Schools are learning organizations and, as such, continued research-based literature should be shared with the leadership team. The better understood the impact a PLC can make on student achievement the more engaged teachers will become. Additionally, learning from other schools who are involved in PLCs would enhance and deepen the learning of the leadership and division PLC teams. Collaboration across schools will also serve to build momentum in engaging and motivating the PLC teams.

As the work continues, I cannot lose sight of the importance of continuing to build relationships and trust with teachers. Consistently being self-aware of acknowledging and valuing teachers’ work, being cognizant of ethical obligations and praising achievements will leverage the momentum needed to sustain the PLC process and move the vision forward.

**Conclusion**

In order for me to lead the new vision of the OIP’s problem of practice, cultivating a culture of collaboration, I need to acknowledge that learning is at the center of every leadership move I make. I will need to consistently reflect on my values as a leader and proudly articulate the change vision to the teachers and other stakeholders.

In my career, I have always led with a vision of *doing whatever it takes* to support staff and students. I will continue to articulate this vision, however, I have come to recognize that research-based theories and proven leadership approaches, when understood and applied, can significantly impact student achievement. Employing my *status quo leadership approach* that has proven successful in the past is not enough. Simply put, students are too important to solely rely on successful past practices without the proven knowledge of research-based theories. These change theories and leadership practices include the AIM, the CPM and the OLF and researchers such as Tschannen-Moran, Hattie, Bolman and Deal and others.
Focusing on the human element in terms of the change recipients is critical but equally important is placing value on an appreciative stance that will result in a positive blueprint of the renewed outcomes. Adhering to my leadership values and the district’s vision of working collaboratively to improve student outcomes (Strategic Plan, 2017) will also bring success to this change initiative. I am looking forward to continuing this important work into the spring of Year One and as Year Two approaches in September 2019.

My ultimate hope is twofold. Firstly, that I am able to attain the goals of the OIP’s problem of practice by the end of Year Two and ultimately close the gap between the vision and goals of the district and those of my school- where collaboration among teachers is visible in words and actions.

And secondly, as I continue to reflect on my practice and growth as a leader, I am able to make the people around me better at their practice so that students continue to improve in their achievement; the ultimate desire of an ethical leader.
References


Human Resources Development and Management, 17(1-2), 129-142.


Somerset: Wiley.


Appendix A

Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation of Goals

**YEAR ONE and YEAR TWO VISIONING**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What/How</th>
<th>Why</th>
<th>Who</th>
<th>When</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How a school principal can create a thriving culture of collaboration among teachers.</td>
<td>Data found that the student achievement has been declining most notably in literacy in grade 3 and grade 10. It was found that teachers did not collaborate on best practices through research based evidence to support student learning.</td>
<td>The new Principal will lead this change initiative.</td>
<td>Year 1 (2018-2019) Year 2 (2019-2020)</td>
<td>Teachers collaborating with an outcome of improving professional learning and increasing student achievement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**YEAR ONE VISIONING- Building Relationships**

OLF: Building Relationships to Facilitate Collaboration- through developing the organization, setting direction on shared vision & improving the instructional program (Year 1)

Change Theories: CPM - Identify the need for change, reach out and empower others, develop new ways of thinking, build momentum

AIM - Image the desired future, building relationships, transform ideas into actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What/How</th>
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<th>When</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collect student achievement data and demographic data including staffing perceptual data</td>
<td>To get a sense of developing the organization of the school to initiate goal setting</td>
<td>Principal and VP</td>
<td>August 2018</td>
<td>Evidence based data to support creating the goals Start building relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meet and Greet</td>
<td>To meet staff in a welcoming environment and to provide opportunity to ask questions about upcoming school year</td>
<td>All staff-secondary and elementary teachers and support staff</td>
<td>September 2018-June 2019</td>
<td>Building relationships and trust to build a foundation to introduce collaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walk Listen Observe Learn (WLOL)</td>
<td>Principal and VP to be highly visible</td>
<td>Principal and Vice-Principal</td>
<td>September 2018- June 2019</td>
<td>Begin to build relationship and trust with staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff meeting</td>
<td>To officially meet all staff in a formal environment. To discuss data findings. Coin this first year, the <em>Year of Discovery</em></td>
<td>Principal, Vice-Principal and all staff</td>
<td>September 2018</td>
<td>Share findings through data collection. Start setting the direction of a shared vision</td>
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<tr>
<td>Superintendent and Principal meeting</td>
<td>To review student achievement data and anecdotes from WLOW</td>
<td>Superintendent and Principal</td>
<td>November 2018</td>
<td>Monitor effectiveness of developing the organization and the shared vision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff meeting</td>
<td>Recognize the accomplishments of individual teachers and encourage staff to reflect on their learning, celebrate relationships. Discuss the <em>Year of Discovery</em> findings</td>
<td>All staff, Principal and VP</td>
<td>October &amp; December 2018</td>
<td>Continue to focus on developing the organization and building relationships to support collaboration. Communicate shared vision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review of documentation collected - from WLOL and one-on-one interviews from September to December 2018</td>
<td>Determine the wants and needs of staff in moving forward with vision of collaboration</td>
<td>Principal and Vice-Principal</td>
<td>January 2019</td>
<td>Encourage the openness to change in the direction of the school’s new vision, build understanding of the new shared vision as it impacts the instructional program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff meeting</td>
<td>Discuss the shared vision of collaboration, celebrate relationships and the Year Discovery findings</td>
<td>Principal, Vice-Principal and all staff</td>
<td>February 2019</td>
<td>Develop leadership in others and interest in the new vision, build consensus</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTES:
| **Create a PLC leadership team.** | **PLC leadership team meeting** | **Principal** | **April 2019** | A productive PLC leadership team to support and share the vision with others. | **Establish a structure of a leadership team to support the PLC process** | **Begin to explore resources to support the learning; possibly The Intelligent, Responsive Leader and Leading Collaborative Learning** | **Principal and PLC leadership team** | **April 2019 & June 2019** | Explore shared visioning, learning of the processes and how to engage the creation of division PLC teams (grade 2 & grade 9) |

**OLF:** Securing Accountability (Year 1)

**Change Theories: CPM -** consolidate progress, review data and feedback, celebrate gains

**AIM -** reflect on actioned goals and determine how the school can become a more appreciative learning culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>What/How</strong></th>
<th><strong>Why</strong></th>
<th><strong>Who</strong></th>
<th><strong>When</strong></th>
<th><strong>Outcome</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Survey of <em>Year of Discovery</em> to be distributed to all staff</td>
<td>To gather feedback on the year in terms of building a collaborative culture in the school, use google survey</td>
<td>Principal &amp; PLC leadership team will create google survey</td>
<td>May 2019</td>
<td>Collect and use data on the goals, use multiple sources to collect data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLC leadership team reflect on their learning</td>
<td>Review the learning the Intelligent Responsive Leader and Leading Collaborative Learning to determine next steps in learning for 2019-2020</td>
<td>Principal, VP &amp; PLC leadership team</td>
<td>June 2019</td>
<td>Understand the importance of using evidence based practices (collaboration) to improve professional learning growth and increase student achievement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### BUILDING A CULTURE OF COLLABORATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Survey team meeting</td>
<td>Review the survey results in order to begin the planning</td>
<td>Principal, VP and PLC leadership team</td>
<td>June 2019</td>
<td>Understand the data that will be shared with the staff, be responsive to the data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director’s visit</td>
<td>Year in review</td>
<td>Principal, VP and PLC leadership team</td>
<td>June, 2019</td>
<td>Provide accurate and transparent account of the school’s performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff meeting</td>
<td>Year of Discovery review and next steps in planning for Year 2</td>
<td>Principal, VP and all staff</td>
<td>June, 2019</td>
<td>Celebrate attainment of shared vision, share data and determine next steps for Year 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### YEAR TWO VISIONING– CREATING PLCs

**OLF:** Improving the Instructional Program and Securing Accountability (Year 2)

**Change Theories:**
- CPM: develop new structures and systems, processes and knowledge and skills
- AIM: bring to life the change and ensure all staff is part of the positive change
- PDSA: In Year 2 with division PLC teams

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What/How</th>
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<th>When</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Walk Listen Observe Learn (WLOL)</td>
<td>Improving the instructional program through continued focus on relationships with grade 2 and 9 teachers</td>
<td>Principal and VP</td>
<td>September, 2019- June, 2020</td>
<td>Building relationships and trust, build upon and respond to individual teachers” needs, observe classroom instruction and provide feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLC leadership team to meet with division PLC teams (grade 2 and grade 9 teachers)</td>
<td>Communicate shared vision of Year 1- possibly changes to the shared vision depending on feedback.</td>
<td>Principal, PLC leadership team and division PLC team teachers</td>
<td>End of September, 2019</td>
<td>Model collaboration in professional learning sessions, encourage collaborative development of group processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division PLC teams will meet regularly to explore inquiry around improving literacy in grade 2 and grade 9</td>
<td>Literacy scores and grade 3 and grade 10 have fallen significantly.</td>
<td>Division PLC teams with a member of the PLC leadership team</td>
<td>Meetings every eight weeks-half days (from October, 2019 to May 2020)</td>
<td>Collect and use data on the goals that are the focus of cultivating a collaborative culture, use multiple sources to collect data</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Staff Meetings | PLC leadership team to communicate learning of PLC and gains made that have impacted student literacy achievement | Principal, VP, PLC leadership team, division PLC teams and all staff | November 2019, February 2020, June 2020 | Understand the data that will be shared with the staff, be responsive to the data

| PLC leadership team | To review data and plan next steps for improvement | PLC leadership team and Principal | Late May 2020 | Lessons learned and setting future direction based on data and securing accountability

| Year end Staff meeting | Share findings of PLC learning and celebrate improvements | Principal, VP, PLC leadership team, division PLC teams and all staff | June 2020 | Celebrate attainment of shared vision of cultivating a culture of collaboration and improved instructional programming, share data and determine next steps for Year 3, celebrate successes |