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A Networked Approach for Curricula Implementation in Support of Inclusive Education Reform

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Abstract

The Maritime Province Department of Education (MPDOE; a pseudonym) has long struggled to address issues of systemic racism that have significantly impacted the academic success and well-being of Indigenous and African Canadian students. When the MPDOE embarked upon its recent inclusive education reform journey, it did so through a series of studies that resulted in a comprehensive reform initiative to address the learning needs of historically marginalized and racialized students. The main thrust of the reform goals focused on curricula to support culturally responsive approaches to learning and the reconfiguring of governance to a more responsive, networked model. Though there is consensus regarding the need for network leadership and governance to advance the reform goal of curricula implementation, the legacy of past practices and problematic relationships among the MPDOE, school regions, and historically marginalized communities must be addressed to move forward with this change. The Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP) explores a solution to this problem of practice (PoP) that proposes a focus on social justice-oriented networked leadership models and intergroup and social learning processes for the development of a network team capable of actioning the implementation reform goal. Explored through a reconceptualized critical paradigm that centres Indigenous and African Canadian perspectives, the development of critical consciousness for network team members to action change further undergirds the solution. As a change facilitator and leader at the MPDOE, the support for the development of a network team tasked with planning curricula implementation will be explored through inclusive, distributed, and systems leadership approaches to guide a reimagining of workplace culture and learning at the MPDOE.

Keywords: inclusive education, curricula implementation, networked governance and leadership, intergroup learning

Executive Summary

This Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP) is an exploration of a problem of practice (PoP) at the

Maritime Province Department of Education (anonymized) that is centred upon the development of a

network team with the attributes and the requisite leadership competencies to successfully plan a

province-wide curricula implementation as part of a larger inclusive education reform process. The

purpose of this OIP is to investigate a proposed solution to the PoP through the synthesis and

application of relevant research focusing on the development of social justice leadership beliefs and

actions through intergroup and dialogical social learning processes, critical to a network team that must

emerge as a more inclusive governing collaborative that values and champions diverse voices and

perspectives to lead and support inclusive education reform. The investigative process for this OIP is

situated within a conceptual framework that is formulated through a reconceptualized critical paradigm

that provides the intellectual space for a bricolage of theories, inclusive of Indigenous knowledges and

African-based epistemologies, that allows for an exploration of social justice-focused network models

for leading and enacting inclusive education reform.

Chapter 1 of the OIP provides an in-depth exploration of the recent transformation of the

MPDOE from a traditional, hierarchical governance model to one that is striving to move towards a

networked, horizontal system that is focused on a collaborative and inclusive model of governance. This

dramatic shift in the organization was the result of a series of reports and studies that painted a dire

picture of Indigenous and African Canadian students' educational circumstances and significant

deficiencies in the MPDOE's governance and administrative structures. My role as a change leader and

the director of curriculum development at the MPDOE provides a lens to view the scope of the

transformative process for the MPDOE, with a particular focus on the route that needs to be traversed

to move the organization from its current state to one that is able to successfully support its reform

goals that include implementation of renewed curricula. This introduction to the MPDOE and the PoP

that encompasses a critical component of the reform process is further investigated through an

intercultural-focused SPEELIT analysis and guiding questions that outline the varied dynamics at play

within a system striving to emerge with the governing structures and working cultures required to

successfully navigate a social justice reform process (Saldana & Mallette, 2017). The leadership focus

vision for change is explored through the lens of the growing body of literature that defines various

mechanisms for supporting the development of networked governance models for education systems.

Rincon-Gallardo and Fullan's (2016) networked leadership and network features development model is

selected to provide the guiding framework for the development of a change process to address the PoP

as the model aligns keys leadership attributes for the development of an adaptive and equity-focused

network team. The chapter concludes with a multilevel organizational analysis that assesses

organizational readiness for change through an equity-focused interrelated process that provides insight

into the varied but aligned factors for change that must be considered for a PoP that is situated within a

larger organizational reform process.

Chapter 2 investigates and illuminates the planning and development of a proposed solution to

the PoP. The description of inclusive, distributed, and systems leadership approaches provides the

backdrop for the exploration of the framework for leading the change process. The transformational

process of the congruence model (Nadler & Tushman, 1989) is aligned with the social action, leadership,

and transformational (SALT) model for leadership development (Museus et al., 2017) and Argyris and

Schon's (1996) double-loop and deutero learning organizational learning model to create an integrated

framework for network team development. The framework is a vital tool for the critical organizational

analysis that highlights key areas that need to be addressed when considering possible solutions to the

PoP. The chapter explores three possible solutions to the PoP: (a) network team development through a

collaborative review of a provincial implementation plan; (b) network team development through a

review process of renewed curricula; and (c) a sole focus on the development of key network feature for

the new network team. The selected solution comprises all three solutions in a multiphase, iterative

change process that focuses on the development of a network team with the leadership competencies

and attributes necessary to support the collaborative planning process for curricula implementation.

The chapter concludes with an exploration of ethical leadership constructs that must be present for a

reform process that is predicated upon social justice and equity-based reform.

Chapter 3 provides a detailed outline of the implementation process, monitoring and evaluation

methods, and a knowledge mobilization-focused communication plan. With attention to the

organizational analysis from Chapter 2, the solution to the PoP is explored through each phase of the

change process. The multiphase change implementation plan is anchored by the learning constructs of

the critical intergroup dialogue process that provides a structured and safe space for network actors to

engage in the development of critical consciousness to activate the social justice leadership actions. This

dynamic learning process aligns with the conceptual framework that seeks to ensure the change

processes for this OIP places a priority on voice and empowerment for network actors who have

previously been denied access to power within the organization. The monitoring and evaluation of this

change process is critical to supporting the development of a network team capable of actioning a key

reform goal. Using a principled approach through the Collaborating for Equity and Justice (CEJ) model

(Wolfe et al., 2020a), the network team is supported and emboldened to own and navigate their

evolution as a collaborative team dedicated to social justice change. Chapter 3 concludes with a

communication plan that honours the necessary communication models for network governance and

supports an aligned, dialogic-based internal communication strategy that provides voice and

opportunity for knowledge sharing throughout the organization.

The OIP concludes with a view of next steps and future considerations for the organization. The

implications for actioning the curricula implementation plan are explored. This process provides insight

into how the working culture at the MPDOE has the opportunity to evolve into a dynamic, inclusive, and

collaborative learning culture that readily embraces social justice beliefs for leading and supporting

inclusive education reform.

Acknowledgements

This Organizational Improvement Plan is dedicated to my parents, Allan and Jeanne Burke—

two dedicated educators who devoted their careers to ensuring the very best for their students and

their school communities.

Education is an act of love, and thus an act of courage.—Paulo Friere

I was fortunate to grow up with two educators who fervently believed that teaching was a

calling and that educators had a moral responsibility to ensure that the voices, perspectives, and lives of

their students were present and centred in their learning experiences. Through watching my parents

create vibrant and dynamic classrooms and organize school-wide events that brought families and

communities together to share in the education journey of their children, I learned that a meaningful

and useful education was one that valued, honoured, and empowered an entire school community. I am

so very grateful for the wonderful example they set for me.

I would also like to acknowledge my amazing team at the department of education. This

dedicated group of individuals has been with me all the way through this academic program. Their

encouragement and interest in this work have kept me going through a challenging past three years.

Our collective work is the inspiration for this Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP). I am so very

fortunate to be part of a team that is focused on helping to create a more inclusive and socially just

education system for the province.

Thank you also to Terry Taylor, my cohort colleague, and my kindred spirit from the opposite

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am so grateful for her friendship and support. A special thank you to Dr. Erin Keith for guiding me

through the OIP development. Erin's expert advice and research suggestions not only helped me craft

the narrative of my OIP but also encouraged me to rethink and redesign professional learning for my

division at the department of education to ensure a better alignment with inclusive principles for

change.

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List of Acronyms

AVID (Alignment, Voice, Identification, and Dialogue)

CEJ (Collaborating for Equity and Justice)

CFE (Centres for Education)

DISC (Dominance, Influence, Steadiness, Conscientiousness)

DLOQ (Dimensions of a Learning Organization Questionnaire)

IGD (Intergroup Dialogue)

KMb (Knowledge Mobilization)

MPDOE (Maritime Province Department of Education)

OIP (Organizational Improvement Plan)

ORC (Organizational Readiness for Change)

PDCA (Plan, Do, Check Act)

PDSA (Plan, Do, Study, Act)

PCNT (Program Coordinator Network Team)

PoP (Problem of Practice)

SALT Model (Social Action, Leadership, and Transformation Model)

SCM (Social Change Model)

SJS (Social Justice Scale)

SPELIT (Social, Political, Economic, Legal, Intercultural, Technological)

SPEELIT (Social, Political, Economic, Environmental, Intercultural, Technological)

Definitions

Critical consciousness: Critical consciousness is the process of gaining knowledge about structural and institutional inequalities (Frantell, et al, 2019).

Division: A division is a subsection of a larger branch within the MPDOE. Branches are led by executive directors and divisions are led by directors (Glaze, 2018).

Intergroup dynamics: Intergroup dynamics refers to the psychological processes and behaviours that typically occur with mixed social groups. This field of psychological study focuses on group problem-solving and decision-making behaviours (Rivas-Drake et al., 2019).

Learning organizations: Learning organizations are often defined by the development of learning cultures that support creative and innovative endeavours within workplaces. These types of learning climates are often facilitated by learning structures that allow for more open and team-based approaches to critical inquiry and creative problem-solving endeavors (Ortenblad, 2004).

Network teams: A network team is comprised of individuals from various levels and spheres within and outside of an organization who are brough together to engage in collaborative problem solving to aid various functions and facilitate change within an organization (Diaz-Gibson, et al., 2017).

New Public Governance: Within a decentralized governance model, new public governance allows for the public to become more involved in the decision-making within various levels of government (Gonzalez, et al., 2020).

School Advisory Councils: School Advisory Councils are volunteer committees that consist of school administrators, parents, teachers, students, and community partners and stakeholders who work to collaboratively problem solve and influence decisions for a school (Glaze, 2018).

Social forces: Social forces are environmental scenarios that can influence how people interact within various social situations and environments (Cortois, 2017).

Social learning: Social learning is a process that denotes growth in learning or change in an understanding that has occurred with a group of individuals focused on engaging in a community of practice. This type of learning is often associated with the development of social interactions and learning processes between actors in a network (Reed et al., 2010).

Two-Eyed Seeing: Eptuaptmunk or Two-Eyed Seeing is a framework that allows for the uniting of Indigenous and non-indigenous ways of knowing and being. It supports multiple perspectives for a co-learning journey of change. One of the original authors of the Two-Eyed Seeing, Albert Marshall, (Bartlett et al., 2015) implores those who choose to engage with the framework honour its Mi'kmaw origins that adamantly asks all participants to recognize that the central premise of Eptuaptmink is to "leave the world a better place and not compromise the opportunities for …youth through…inaction (p.11).

Chapter 1: Overview and Problem

The Maritime Province's Department of Education (MPDOE; a pseudonym), has recently experienced significant change as a result of an inclusive education reform initiated to reimagine and realign the organization to ensure equitable and enhanced learning opportunities for all learners, with a particular focus on students from Indigenous and African Canadian communities (Glaze, 2018; Maritime Province, 2015). Critical to this process is the development of culturally responsive and inclusive approaches to learning through the implementation of recently renewed curricula and a reconfiguration of MPDOE governance structures to support an inclusive and system-wide approach to change (Glaze, 2018). A key structural shift for the organization is the creation of mandated network teams, comprised of leaders from the MPDOE, the school regions, and community partners from Indigenous and African Canadian communities, which must be supported to evolve as dedicated collectives with the attributes and collaborative will to guide the evolution of a more inclusive and responsive education system (Glaze, 2018). As the director of curriculum development and a change facilitator and leader at the MDPOE, my role has been expanded beyond facilitating the design of curricula to include the support of network team development to aid in the curricula implementation process. Thus, the problem of practice (PoP) for this organizational improvement plan (OIP) is situated within the challenge of determining a pathway for the development of a social justice-oriented network team that is equipped and empowered with the requisite leadership skills and attributes to plan for curricula implementation in support of inclusive education reform.

This chapter is focused on examining the varied components that comprise the introduction of the PoP. Through an exploration of organizational context, that includes the recent reform of the MPDOE to address long-standing issues of systemic inequities and racism, the chapter will detail the PoP that informs this OIP. Further, the chapter will explore the leadership-focused vision for change and

review the organization's efforts to determine readiness for change that provides much needed guidance for the development of subsequent OIP chapters.

Organizational Context

The MPDOE, like most provincial education systems in the country, strives to provide a range of programming and to engage in regular reviews to ensure learning opportunities are optimized for students amidst an often-changeable political landscape (Fullan, 2016; Glaze, 2018). Along with engaging in an expansive inclusive education reform process, the MPDOE has recently added universal pre-primary education to its primary to grade 12 programming in English, French Immersion, and French First Language. The provincial department of education now includes over 200 employees from seven branches that support early learning, policy development, curricula design, student services, provincial assessment, and two recently reconfigured branches dedicated to the support of Indigenous and African Canadian communities (Glaze, 2018). The Maritime province's newly configured eight school regions are comprised of over 350 schools, approximately 12, 000 school-based positions, 1900 regional employees, and 950 school administrators.

Governance

In 2018 the province's eight elected school boards and the department of education began a journey to transform into a modern, unified system with a common goal of meeting the needs of all learners (Glaze, 2018). Seven of the province's eight elected school boards were dissolved as a result of a review that cast a light on the role of school boards and necessary supports for marginalized and historically racialized students. Only the francophone board remained (Glaze, 2018). The seven boards were renamed Centres for Education (CFE; a pseudonym), and continued operation under the leadership of executive directors of education. To empower local voices, School Advisory Councils (SACs) were created with enhanced influence that included regular meetings with senior education leadership at the MPDOE and the CFE. At the department level, the two branches that were given specific

mandates to support the transformation of learning environments for Indigenous and African Canadian students were provided with increased funding for staffing and the development of enhanced programming (Glaze, 2018). In addition to the new branches, the MPDOE was restructured (see Figures 1 and 2) to allow staff to move more easily between branches to support a series of network teams created to ensure that leadership at the department, school regions, various education partners, and advocates from historically marginalized communities collectively acted to problem-solve and enact change for education in the province (Glaze, 2018; Maritime Province, 2015). More information on the transformation of the province's educational governance can be found in Appendix A, Figures A1 and A2.

Figure 1

Restructured MPDOE
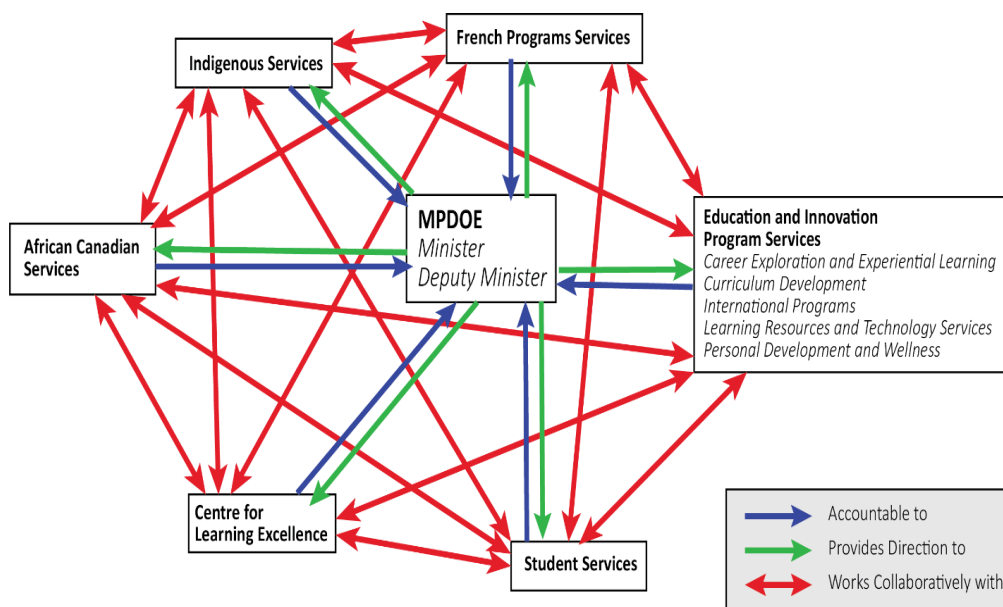
Note. MPDOE=Maritime Province Department of Education

This new networked model of governance now defines the work for leaders within the system as they navigate the reform process. As a leader of curricula development at the MPDOE, this shift

represents an exciting opportunity to work with a wide range of diverse partners and stakeholders for the design and implementation of curricula to support the reform process.

Figure 2

Reconfigured Education Governance Structure for the Maritime Province
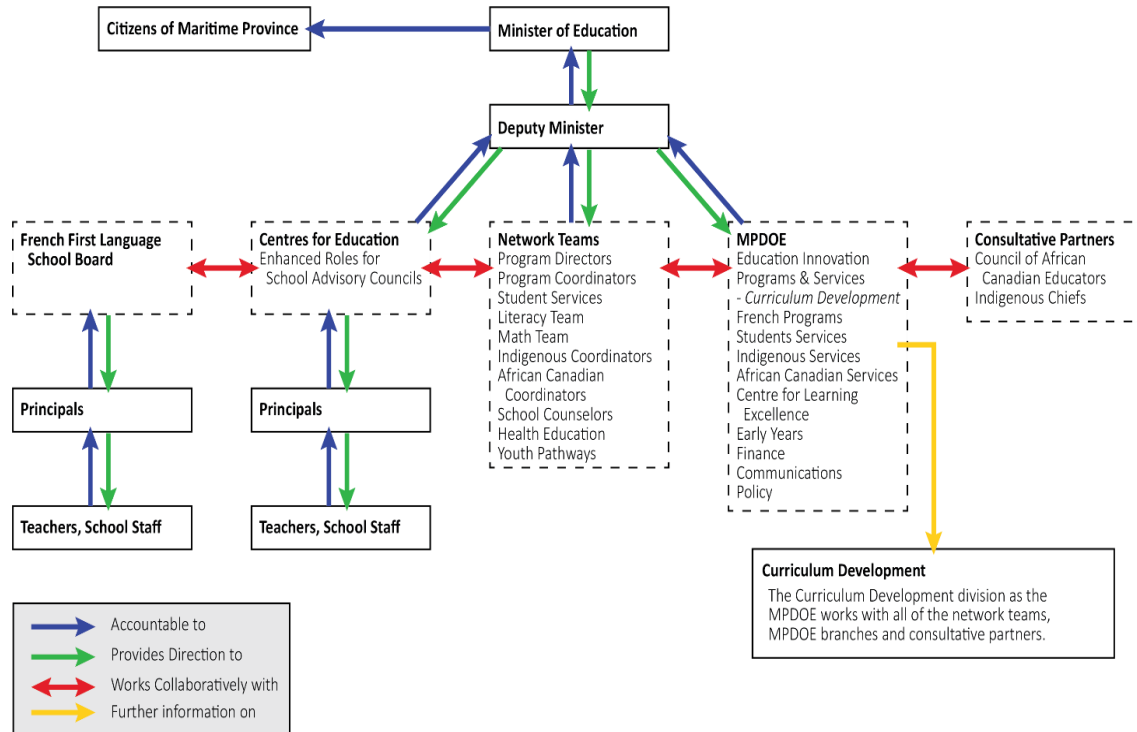
Economics, Politics, Society, and Culture

While the MPDOE has recently increased spending to support education reform, with an additional $50 million added to the annual 1.2-billion-dollar budget, the provincial coffers are often strained as the province's economy remains one of the weakest in Canada (Maritime, Province, 2019c; Maritime Province, 2020b). The collapse of the fisheries along with steel and coal production facilities has resulted in fewer employment options within the province. This shift in the provincial economy has left many communities with challenging financial situations (Ivany et al., 2014). According to the 2018 Canadian Income Survey, 10% of the province's population live below the poverty line, which is well above the Canadian average that sits at a little over eight percent (Maritime Province, 2020b). Almost a

quarter of the children in the province live in poverty, the third-highest rate in the country (Frank et al., 2020). While Indigenous and African Canadian communities comprise less than 10% of the province's total population, they bear the burden of the highest child poverty rates in the province with many communities experiencing almost 50% of their children living below the poverty line (Frank et al., 2020).

Racialized poverty rates in the province reflect a series of system failures that have translated into inadequate and inequitable learning scenarios for Indigenous and African Canadian communities (Maritime Province, 2015). Disaggregated provincial assessments for literacy and numeracy over a series of years have consistently pointed to significant learning opportunity gaps for Indigenous and African Canadian students in comparison to their non-identified peers (Glaze, 2018; Maritime Province, 2020c). As academic learning environments and achievement are often connected to well-being and feelings of inclusion and acceptance, recent surveys focusing on school experiences have clearly shown that students of African and Indigenous descent feel less safe and less respected within their schools compared to the majority of students within the system (Maritime Province, 2018; Maritime Province 2020a; Whitley & Hollweck, 2020).

The varied political, economic, social, and cultural constructs that ensured the disenfranchisements of African Canadian and Indigenous students in the education system have emerged as part of the overarching narrative that defines the work, culture, and restructuring at the MPDOE. Although various department structures and processes of the organization have been transformed to support a more flexible and collaborative working environment, it is now well recognized that the acceptance of responsibility for the current conditions of marginalized students in the province and a commitment to shift this narrative must underscore the daily objectives for the organization (Glaze, 2018). A legacy of mistrust, decades of failed attempts to address system deficiencies, and the persistent denial of voice and agency for Indigenous and African Canadian communities are reminders of

the ongoing need to the build the relationships and capacities in the system to facilitate and sustain

much-needed change (Maritime Province, 2014, 2015).

Mission, Values, Goals, and Leadership

Public criticism about persistent learning opportunity gaps for historically marginalized and

racialized students and concerns about the overall quality of public education prompted a series of

investigations that resulted in the province's 2015 reform document, the *Action Plan for Education*

(Maritime Province, 2014, 2015). The province's reform plan (Maritime Province, 2015) was designed

with a mandate of change to support the province's journey towards a more socially-just and equity-

based education system that included support for the development of inclusive learning environments

and a more responsive and unified governance structure. These changes were considered essential for a

system that had long failed to meet the learning needs of historically marginalized students.

The plan for the reconfiguration of the province's administrative and governance structures

emerged with a review of the governance and administrative systems by Dr. Avis Glaze. Dr. Glaze's

(2018) report, *Raise the Bar,* succinctly outlined both the impetus behind the need for the reform of

public education in the Maritime province and the necessary system transformation as defined by a

networked or 'New Public Governance' framework to guide the development of a horizontal system

where leaders, along with a range of partners and stakeholders, would work collaboratively to support

change (Ehren et al., 2017; Theisens et al., 2016). The *Raise the Bar* (Glaze, 2018) report emerged as a

blueprint document for the implementation of the reform components detailed in the *Action Plan for*

Education (Maritime Province, 2015). Both policy documents highlighted specific leadership qualities

and actions necessary for an inclusive and culturally responsive reform process and provided guidance

for the development of system change.

Reflecting upon the directives of the *Action Plan for Education*, Dr. Glaze (2018) asserted that for

the province's reform efforts to be successful, leaders throughout the system would need to embrace a

clear moral purpose, focused on an inclusive leadership philosophy. Encouraging leaders to eschew the traditional models of governance and administration that focused on narrow goals and the avoidance of any form of variability, Dr. Glaze (2018) noted that the pathway for change would be found in embracing leadership philosophies and actions that would ensure that historically marginalized communities were provided agency and voice in the provincial reform process.

Though there are some discrepancies regarding how inclusive leadership is defined, much of the writing focuses on addressing inequities for those who have been historically marginalized—aligning with the province's direction for leadership in its reform policies (Amiot et al., 2020; Glaze, 2018; Khalifa et al., 2016; Lewis, 2016; Ryan, 2006; Wang, 2018). Indeed, many of these same writings underscore the need for government-based, larger-scale systemic change in education for inclusive leadership to be fully effective. The research, while providing the necessary philosophical approach and guidance for reform endeavours in the province, does not yield an entirely fulsome scope for the actioning of inclusive principles for system-based change. Ryan (2006) identifies this potential gap and notes that for inclusive leadership to be authentically inclusive and socially just, it must be exercised through distributed and systems-based forms of leadership within more aligned and connected education systems.

According to a growing body of research that is referenced in the province's reform policies, public education has entered into a more collaborative and network-driven era defined by goals to innovate for more inclusive and responsive systems (Diaz-Gibson, et al., 2017; Ehren et al., 2017; Glaze, 2018; Segato & Raab, 2019; Theisens, 2016). As articulated in the *Raise the Bar* (Glaze, 2018) report, there is a need for distributed and systems leadership actions to foster intentional community with an emphasis on collaborative relationships where all stakeholders and partners are engaged in sustainable change throughout the organization. It is distributed leadership that supports the capacity-building amongst diverse actors for shared decision-making and systems leadership that moves collective endeavours throughout organizations engaging in social justice reform through a networked approach

(Azorin et al., 2020; Cousin, 2019). These same leadership constructs, in conjunction with the mission and goals for educational change, provide the pathway for change leaders in the system to align moral purpose and the development of a culture of collaboration and accountability to drive system reform for the province's historically marginalized learners.

Leadership Position and Lens Statement

As an education leader of Acadian and Indigenous descent who has held many roles within the province's public education system, I have always been guided in my practice by the values of inclusivity and equity. Operating from a critical paradigm, empowerment, activism, and social justice have long defined my actions as an educator, but I am mindful that these values are not generally regarded as the norm for educational leaders working within politically based, bureaucratic institutions (Apple, 2017; Lewis, 2016). Indeed, a great deal of the literature on equity and leadership actions for inclusion and social justice in public education has focused on efforts and the actions of actors at the local level of the system actively working to circumvent government-mandated, neo-liberal practices and policies (Amiot et al., 2020; Apple, 2016; Hursh, 2017; Mattheis, 2017). However, as Fullan (2019) asserts, "the micro and the macro can and must be reconciled" (p.116) for meaningful change in public education to be fully actioned.

The journey to blur the boundaries between multiple levels within a complex social organization to support equity-based education reform is often described through the actions of leaders who strive to create the conditions in a system that inspire a collective commitment to collaborate and problem-solve to improve the learning conditions for all students (Fullan, M. & Quinn, 2016; Hargreaves & Ainscow, 2015). It is through this lens for transformation that I, as the director of the curriculum development division in the MPDOE, have embarked upon the collective work of addressing long-standing opportunity gaps for the province's historically marginalized students. I am fortunate to have the opportunity to support this transformation in my province as it not only aligns with my values and

experiences as an educator, but it also allows me to engage with a change process that provides an avenue for an expansion of my worldview as an education leader.

Reconceptualized Critical Theory

When considering a theoretical context within which to situate the varied social, cultural, and moral dimensions of social justice change for leadership and reform within a complex social system, it is vital to look to a model that provides the ethical space for alternate points of view and perspectives that must be wholly valued and integrated into the learning process (Steinberg & Kincheloe, 2010). For this OIP, where Indigenous and African Canadian voices and perspectives must be present to counter often unchallenged, Western assumptions and stereotypes, a reconceptualized critical theory informed by a theoretical bricolage provides a valuable lens to interrogate and investigate constructs of power and privilege associated with equity-based reform. More information on this critically informed conceptual framework can be found in Appendix B.

The earliest iterations of critical theory that emerged from the Frankfurt School in the 1940s and the later writings of the New Left in the 1960's would appear to provide a sound theoretical basis for any work that seeks to shed light on social issues that have emerged from cultural assumptions and specific social structures (Bohman, 2005). Indeed, the writings of Horkheimer, a leader of the Frankfurt School, as described by Bronner (2011), defines critical theory as a method to discern the ills of the Western world with intellectual tools that aim to both critique and transform society for the emancipation for all who have been subjugated and exploited. Many of the early critical theorists were influenced by Marxist ideas of capitalism as the sole base for all social structures that influence and potentially resist efforts to transform society to be more democratic and egalitarian. However, Steinberg and Kincheloe (2011) contend that employing critical theory in the more complex 21st-century social milieu must involve moving beyond the notion of a singular economic determinant of democracy. The authors propose that critical theory must evolve to consider multiple forms of power that emerge with

"race, class, gender, and sexuality, ideologies, discourses, religion, education, and other social dynamics that interact to construct social systems" (Steinberg & Kincheloe, 2011, p. 143). A reconceptualized critical theory opens the intellectual space to challenge and decentre commonly held Western interpretations of the modern world with the use of a melange of theories that provide distinct lenses to engage in ideas and ways of thinking that had been previously excluded from earlier iterations of a critical theoretical approach (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2011).

With the use of a bricolage of theories, which includes Indigenous knowledges and African-based epistemologies, reconceptualized critical theory emerges as a critical moral pedagogy that can provide equal footing for non-Western ways of knowing and, indeed, liberates subjugated knowledges (Steinberg & Kinchoe, 2010). As this PoP and organizational improvement plan are centred upon reconciliation for the healing of injustices perpetrated against historically marginalized communities through reform of an education system to be more inclusive and responsive, it is imperative that the work be grounded in a framework that honours and values multiple perspectives, inclusive of Indigenous and non-Indigenous beliefs and concepts, for a co-learning journey for change. Two-Eyed Seeing asks that people "see from one eye the strength of Indigenous knowledge and ways of knowing, and from the other eye, the strengths of Western knowledge" (Bartlett et al., 2015, p. 3) Sankofa, an Akan African principle, promotes restorative practices through the exercise of seeking wisdom from the past to influence future thoughts and actions (Watson & Wiggan, 2016). Both these guiding principles of knowledge, together with a bricolage of theories and methodologies that includes complexity, pragmatism, and complex adaptive systems, allow for a more expansive utilization of critical theory to explore leadership philosophies and practices in support of transformative social justice change for the province's education system (Edson & McGee, 2016; Hudon & Rouillard, 2105; Mason, 2016; Pavlis & Gkiosos, 2017).

Inclusive Leadership

Leadership that supports a critical pedagogy, as Ryan (2006) and Shields (2014) describe in their research, encompasses equity and social justice, but also aims to ensure that marginalized members of an education community are empowered within all aspects of the system. Ryan (2006) particularly notes that meaningful inclusion, "can only be achieved when the structural and inherent features of an already unequal system are changed…The marginalized must be empowered so that they will be able to gain confidence and develop skills to control their participation" (p. 7). This is the type of leadership—one defined through an inclusive lens—that is at the heart of my role as a change facilitator and change leader.

Inclusive leadership is often defined as the ability to foster relationships of trust within an organization. Inclusive leaders take the time to engage in dialogue that is essential to gain an understanding of the ideas, concerns, and contexts for the unique lived circumstances of the constituents that comprise their organization (Northouse & Lee, 2022; Ryan, 2006, 2014). For effective dialogue to occur, leaders need to provide the space for honest and productive communication. Communication strategies are central to this form of leadership. To create the conditions that support an inclusive culture, Ryan (2014) contends that leaders must endeavour to engage in practices that allow for self-reflection on privilege, a suspension of personal authority, and the removal of oneself as the main knowledge bearer. With these attributes, leaders can create the conditions that support a culture of equity and inclusion within an education setting.

However, I see inclusive leadership as more than a set of attributes or specific practices. As described by Lewis (2016), inclusive leadership in education is about an overarching set of guiding principles—a set of beliefs and ideals to guide equity and social justice-based decisions and practices. These same ideals that guide my practices as a leader have also been the defining factors in the reform-based redesign of provincial curricula and the governance and administrative structures of the MPDOE

(Glaze, 2018). This change process now requires a decisive shift from hierarchical to more distributed decision-making along with a commitment to persistent and inclusive change throughout the education system.

Distributed and Systems Leadership

Ryan (2006) identifies distributed leadership as "one of the more insightful approaches" to support and advance the priorities and overarching ideals of an inclusive approach to change (p.8). Distributed leadership supports the shared decision-making necessary to foster intentional community with an emphasis on truly collaborative relationships where all within an organization are engaged with transformational change (Hammershaimb, 2018; Ryan, 2006). A distributed focus on leadership values the work of all who support an endeavour. It allows for leadership expertise to grow and flourish among various members of a team, and it supports a system reconfiguration that demands more lateral decision-making (Azorin et al., 2019). Indeed, as the reform process in the province's education system is centred upon a networked approach to facilitate equity-based change, a distributed leadership focus allows, as described by Heikka et al., (2012) in Azorin et al., (2020), the "building of relationships through the validation of professional expertise and empowerment of people and diversity" (p.118). The value of this leadership model to my work as a change facilitator within the MPDOE emerges with its ability to advance inclusive leadership principles to ensure the voices of previously excluded communities are valued and heard at the various network tables engaged in the work to support system reform.

Moving the moral imperatives of reform throughout an education system requires a macro view of system change (Fullan, 2020; Liou et al., 2019). Committed to working at all levels of an organization, systems leaders help make meaningful connections to the change agenda at each level of an organization. With a commitment to building relationships at all levels within a system and the ability to be adaptable and innovative during the challenging times of a change process, systems leaders create the conditions necessary to move the various components of complex change (Liou et al., 2019).

Essential to the reform endeavours in the Maritime province's education system, systems leadership provides the necessary bridge to extend the inclusive and distributed leadership efforts throughout a complex system. As a change leader endeavouring to support a networked approach for reform, systems leadership strengthens the collaborative efforts to create a shared responsibility for social justice reform throughout the system.

Reflected in the moral purpose for social justice change that underscores my credo as an education leader and the reform mandate that I am supporting through my role at the MPDOE, a combined inclusive, distributed, and systems leadership approach supports the complex change process that underscores this OIP. Indeed, as outlined in the policies and the research that define the reform process in the provincial education system, changes in today's education systems necessitate efforts to engage and empower diverse communities to collaborate with actors from all levels of a system to action education goals that uplift all learners (Glaze, 2018). The complexity of demands on education systems endeavouring to engage in equity-based reform cannot be expected to shift with the traditional governance and leadership practices of the past (Edson & McGee, 2016). Thus, as a department-based change leader provided with the opportunity to support the development of a networked approach for reform aimed at altering the learning trajectories of historically marginalized students, aligned integration of inclusive, distributed, and systems leadership provides the most promising model for guiding successful and sustainable change for the provincial education system.

Leadership Problem of Practice

The impetus behind the desire for a more inclusive and responsive education system in the Maritime province evolved from the efforts of historically marginalized communities to expose the impact of systemic racism on the lives of their children (Glaze, 2018). A series of failed attempts to implement successive antiracist and inclusive education initiatives on the part of the MPDOE prompted a larger-scale review that ultimately led to a social justice-based restructuring plan for the system

(Glaze, 2018; Maritime Province, 2014;). As a result of this review, two policy initiatives, the *Action Plan for Education* (Maritime Province, 2015) and the *Raise the Bar* (Glaze, 2018) report, were enacted to address long-standing opportunity gaps for the province's historically marginalized students through the development of culturally responsive and inclusive curricula and the reconfiguration of governance structures to support a more responsive system (Glaze, 2018; Maritime Province, 2015). While changes to curricula to support inclusive and culturally responsive learning opportunities have been initiated, the implementation process is taking place in a system that is still endeavouring to shift to a network-based governance model. The curricula implementation process needs to be articulated against the backdrop of a system with actors who are all operating within a range of spheres and with different understandings of the governance reform process and the necessary leadership models and practices to support inclusive education reform. (Baker et al., 2011; Diaz-Gibson, et. al., 2017; Glaze, 2018;). Education leaders throughout the system must now learn to work collaboratively in newly created, inclusive, multi-level, and cross-appointed network teams, which have the agency to shape practices and processes for a more inclusive and responsive education system (Hargreaves & Ainscow, 2015; Lewis, 2016). As a PoP, the challenge is determining a pathway for the configuration, development, and support of an equity-focused and social justice-oriented network team that is equipped and empowered with the leadership skills and dispositions to plan and initiate the implementation of curricula designed to shift the learning trajectories of the province's historically marginalized and racialized students.

Role of Change Facilitators for Equity-Based Education Reform in Networked Systems

There is a growing realization that education leaders at the most senior levels within a system play an important role in initiating, supporting, and maintaining equity-based reform endeavours (Ainscow, 2020, Edson & McGee, 2016; Liou, et al., 2015; Mowat, 2019; Rincon-Gallardo, 2019). Leaders at these levels can leverage the resources and infrastructure to mobilize transformational system change (Kapucu & Hu., 2020). However, political structures can easily constrain these efforts without

leadership and policy dedicated to expanded and interconnected systems (Mowat, 2019; Rincon-Gallardo, 2019). Indeed, this level of advocacy typically only emerges within a system that has made a commitment to move away from hierarchical authority and vertical power structures to embrace more horizontal operational settings focused on mutual learning and shared accountability for change (Glaze, 2018; Harris, 2016; Rincon-Gallardo & Fullan, 2016). For leaders facilitating this level of reform within an organization that has made this commitment to change, this is the work of creating conditions for networked leadership learning (Liou et al., 2015; Theisens, 2016).

While this author is fortunate to have the opportunity to support this change within governance functions and the direction of an education system, the evolution of my role to one of a "system broker"—a change actor and leader tasked with bridging the relationships and gaps between actants from various levels and spheres within an organization to engage in network governance—necessitates the development of a plan that supports an inclusive culture through capacity building, partnership involvement, and open dialogue (Theisens, 2016). While my disposition, beliefs, and even past experiences supporting successful collaborative teams within my work at the school and regional level have provided me with a level of competency to navigate the development and sustainment of a cross-sectional network team, the complexity of this level of horizontal governance poses a very real challenge (Ball & Juneman, 2012; Segato & Raab, 2019). As Theisens (2016) notes in his analysis of the growth of networks within education governance systems across the globe, the idea of networks as a promising concept to governments has emerged with the expansion of a range of complex social realities, but there is no guidebook for civil servants to support the development these complex, collaborative governance structures. Indeed, this OIP emerges for me as a blueprint to navigate the establishment of key network features and processes to successfully support the reform changes in an education system striving to engage in more horizontal governance structures in support of equity-based and inclusive reforms (Rincon-Gallardo & Fullan, 2016; Theisens, 2016).

Framing the Problem of Practice

The desire to engage in inequity-based reform has evolved from the Maritime province's history of systemic racism—racism articulated through varied economic, social, political, and cultural constructs that have been woven into the fabric of the province's education system (Battiste, 2013; Black Learners Advisory Committee, 1994). The *BLAC Report* (Black Learners Advisory Committee, 1994) was one of the first public examinations and critiques of the province's education system that shone a light on the extensive history of systemic racism that ensured the disenfranchisement of African Canadians, Indigenous, and other racialized students and their communities. From that initial report, it would take another twenty years before the province took more decisive action (Glaze, 2018; Maritime Province 2015). Indeed, it was after the first set of disaggregated results for literacy and numeracy were published in 2013 that the province commissioned a series of education reviews to focus on the next steps for the system to ensure that all learners, particularly those who were historically marginalized, had access to learning environments that were inclusive, supportive, and engaging. The first of the reviews, the *Disrupting the Status Quo* (Maritime Province, 2014) report, concluded that the province's education system suffered from a plethora of poorly implemented antiracism reforms and initiatives.

Marginalization and Education

The Maritime province is not unique in the country for its failure to address issues of inequity and systemic racism in its education system (Bale & Kawaguchi, 2020; Chadha et al. 2020; George et al., 2020; Nelson & Dunn, 2017; Wotherspoon & Milne, 2020). A 2017 United Nations Human Rights Council report on minority issues pointed to clear evidence that Canadian education systems had consistently failed to implement policies and initiatives designed to address the ongoing marginalization and subjugation of racialized youth and other disadvantaged communities. Research from across Canada indicates that the consequences of these failed actions for racialized youth are manifested through the following barriers and obstacles in school systems: high risk of dropping out, steaming into non-

academic programming, stereotyping in curricula and resources, lack of access into post-secondary

programming, and overrepresentation in resource and special education programs (Chadha et al., 2020;

George et al., 2002; Jean-Pierre & James, 2020; Wotherspoon & Milne, 2020). These circumstances

result in economic and social exclusion for a disproportionate number of racialized minorities within the

country (Human Rights Council, 2010a, 2010b; United Nations Human Rights Council, 2014, 2017).

Educational System Change for Equity and Inclusion

Education systems have proven to be challenging environments for inclusive and equity-based

reform (Ainscow, 2020; Ainscow & Sandill, 2010; Lemke & Sabelli, 2008; Whitley & Hollweck, 2020).

These scenarios are frequently attributed to the complexity of these organizations, which are

characterized by a multitude of intersecting socio-cultural scenarios interwoven within a complex web

of administrative and governance structures (Edson & McGee, 2016; Lemke & Sabelli, 2008). Notable

researchers in the field of inclusive and antiracist education reform often advocate for a whole system

approach to support the development of inclusive and equitable education systems (Ainscow, 2020; Dei,

2008; Lopez & Gaetane, 2021; Wotherspoon & Milne, 2020). Research points to the necessity of leaders

within government promoting a network-based, collaborative model of shared leadership that helps

open the doors to various stakeholders and partners in a system, particularly families and communities,

to be equal partners in a change process dedicated to more inclusive and equitable learning

environments (Ainscow, 2020; Dei, 2008; Lopez et al., 2021; Rincon-Gallardo, 2019; Wotherspoon &

Milne, 2020). Within these shared spaces, government and regional/district level leaders must strive to

promote inclusive methods for challenging the many and often complex factors and barriers to change.

Investigating and interrogating these barriers provides the necessary clarity to build the relationships

and capacities to ensure that inclusive practices are not just part of the school landscape but of the daily

actions that are carried out by leaders throughout the system in support of the reform process

(Ainscow, 2020; Rincon-Gallardo, 2019).

Social, Political, Economic, Environmental, Legal, Intercultural, and Technological (SPEELIT) Analysis

To discern the overarching macro components of the Maritime province's education system and the various factors that will need to be considered for the change process as defined in this OIP, the Social, Political, Environmental, Legal, Intercultural, and Technological (SPELIT) framework, an environmental evaluative framework developed by Schmieder-Ramierez and Mallette (2007), provides a flexible and multidimensional analysis model to delve into the key environmental scenarios that have influenced the evolution of an organization, the lived experiences of its marginalized communities, and actions to support equity-based change. The SPELIT framework is designed to offer a wide degree of latitude regarding its application as it allows for varying degrees of element weighting and grouping, along with the flexibility to add and remove framework elements to ensure a thorough and thoughtful analysis of an organization and the range of scenarios that influence and define it (Saldana & Mallette, 2017).

The activation of the framework for a more targeted and in-depth analysis requires the use of qualitative coding models, as described by Saldana and Mallette (2017), that provides a means to determine, classify, and evaluate influential factors within an environment. For this analysis, which is centred upon an environment and an organization that is largely defined by systemic racism, I have selected axial coding that allows for this central theme to support a multidimensional and interrelated analysis of the framework elements and causal coding that seeks to identify significant drivers, their outcomes, and links between them (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2016; Saldana & Mallette, 2017). To further support this analysis, I have added an environmental element to examine issues of systemic environmental racism that have significant repercussions on the health and well-being of historically marginalized and racialized communities. I have also selected the intercultural element of the framework to be a more heavily weighted and overarching factor in the analysis as it allows for the intersection of cultural marginalization within each of the other six elements of the framework (Saldana

& Mallette, 2017). As further defined and depicted in Appendix C, this evaluative model provides the means to interrogate and examine an array of historical and current systemic racism realities that provide specific insight into the various change processes and their role in shaping how the PoP will be addressed in the OIP**.**

An Intercultural Lens on the Social, Political, Legal, and Economic Impacts of Systemic Racism

The legacy of legislated discrimination in the province's education system spurred the development of Indigenous and African Canadian advocacy organizations that have remained resilient in the face of oppression and diligently campaigned for equitable and inclusive learning environments for their children (Glaze, 2018; Hamilton-Hinch et al., 2021). As noted in the description of the PoP, it is only since the larger investigation and provincial survey in 2013 that the political will has emerged with the policies and actions to take more decisive steps to address inequities and issues of systemic racism within the province's education system (Maritime Province, 2014). However, the consequences of compounding effects of systemic racism within the province and its various institutions have been significant and continue to persist.

Indigenous and African Canadian peoples within the province remain poorly represented in leadership positions within various political and governing organizations, including the provincial education system (Glaze, 2018; Hamilton-Hinch et al., 2021). The *BLAC* report (Black Learners Advisory Committee, 1994) clearly articulated the harm Indigenous and African Canadian students had experienced because of the lack of representation in leadership positions throughout every level of the provincial education system. Dr. Glaze (2018) further articulated in the *Raise the Bar* report that students from historically marginalized and racialized communities have long suffered because of leaders who failed to understand and appreciate their rich cultures and histories, along with the impact of systemic racism on their lived experiences in relation to the learning environment.

The consequences of African Canadian and Indigenous students learning needs not being adequately acknowledged and addressed in the system have been dire. Canadian Census results identify socioeconomic variables such as employment, occupation, and income consistently placing African Canadian, Indigenous, and other racialized communities at a significant disadvantage compared to the average person in the province (Statistics Canada, 2017). The cycle of poverty, a result of low income and limited access to post-secondary programming and resources to support efforts that could shift the circumstances of many communities, has created a series of issues related to well-being, nutrition, and health care that continue to impact the province's historically marginalized students (Frank et al., 2020).

An Intercultural Lens on Environmental and Technological Impacts of Systemic Racism

Often pushed to the margins of the province, with lands that held limited potential, Indigenous and African Canadian communities have been forced to suffer a myriad of indignities (Green, 2021; Waldron, 2020). Environmental racism has served to define the daily lives of peoples of African descent and Indigenous populations in the Maritime province. From the forced removal and destruction of an African Canadian community in the late 1960s to the impact of fifty years of effluent being dumped into a body of water adjacent to an Indigenous reserve, the province's African Canadian and Indigenous communities have suffered from decades of government-sanctioned environmental racism (Green, 2021). The culmination of historical and ongoing racial discrimination continues to force racially marginalized communities in the Maritime province to live with the impacts of environmental harm, which contribute to issues of physical and mental health (Green, 2021; Waldron, 2020).

Another consequence of living in some of the more remote geographic areas of the province, many Indigenous and African Canadian communities are forced to contend with limited access to a range of amenities, including communication technologies. A lack of infrastructure for rural internet compounds issues of poverty that define much of the province's marginalized populations (Waldron, 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic, which shuttered schools throughout the province for months at a time,

shone a light on the issues surrounding inadequate access to the internet and technology for learning

for students from historically marginalized communities in the province (Maritime Province, 2020a).

Indeed, international education reports and provincial reviews have criticized the MPDOE for not

addressing the disparities of learning technologies, amongst other inequities, for students of historically

marginalized communities (Hamilton-Hinch et al., 2021; United Nations Human Rights Council, 2017).

The intercultural-focused SPEELIT analysis paints a poignant picture of the impact systemic

racism has had on the lives of people within historically marginalized communities. However, decades of

advocacy efforts from community organizations to press for inclusion and equity in the provincial

education system and acknowledgement of the impact of systemic racism on their children have finally

been recognized. Viable pathways for successfully navigating a redesign and restructuring of the

organization, its governing structures, and leadership models to support the learning needs of all

students are evident in the research and the reform plans for the province. As a change facilitator and

leader in this process, it is evident that this hard-fought opportunity to engage in inclusive and equity-

based reform cannot be squandered; the well-being and learning trajectories of historically marginalized

students in the province are at stake.

Guiding Questions for the Problem of Practice

As this PoP is nested within a larger reform endeavour that requires thoughtful exploration of

capacity building for a new organizational paradigm to address issues of inequity for a province's

historically marginalized communities, there are key areas of inquiry related to this transformational

endeavour and associated leadership roles that must be considered for this process. Utilizing a complex

critical approach to interrogate the varied dynamics at play in a provincial education system striving to

engage in a reform process designed to support equity and inclusion for students, the guiding questions

for this leadership PoP must embrace the realities of change within education systems as complex

adaptive entities (Edson & McGee, 2016; Mason, 2016; Steinberg & Kincheloe, 2010). To address these

critical components, the following three questions are explored: (a) How does a social justice-based reform mandate influence leadership beliefs and practices within a public education system (Fullan, 2016b; Lewis, 2016)?; (b) What role do leadership beliefs and practices play in bridging professional and relational silos for the development of network teams in a complex social system (Kapucu & Hu, 2020; Theisens, 2016)?; and (c) How can a network team support curricula implementation for a provincial reform process (Rincon-Gallardo & Fullan, 2016; Theisens et al., 2016)?

As Edson and McGee (2016), argue in their analysis of governance structures and leadership in modern education systems, the traditional models of governance and leadership strategies of the past are no longer viable with the complex demands of more diverse learning communities. With a need to reconcile the perspectives of diverse partners and to motivate and engage a range of actors from various levels within an organization for common education goals, a central question for this OIP emerges with how an inclusive and equity-based education reform mandate can shape and transform leadership beliefs and practices for those facilitating change within the system (Edson & McGee, 2016; Fullan, 2016; Lewis, 2016). Expanding upon this initial question is an exploration of what role leadership beliefs and practices play in the removal of professional and relational silos for the development of network teams in a complex social system (Kapucu & Hu, 2020; Theisens, 2016). This query looks at the interplay of specific leadership models commonly associated with the development of network teams that collaborate effectively to support and facilitate change (Ainscow, 2020; Azorin et al., 2020; Kamp, 2018). To further delve into my problem of practice, the next inquiry focus would need to address how a network team can be developed and sustained to support curricula implementation for an inclusive and equity-focused provincial reform process (Rincon-Gallardo & Fullan, 2016; Theisens et al., 2016). While these queries aim to clarify key components of the problem of practice and organizational improvement plan, they must be considered against the backdrop of the complex factors and change drivers that have shaped the cultural-political landscape of the provincial education system.

Leadership-Focused Vision for Change

The development of a network team to facilitate the implementation of renewed curricula to support more inclusive and culturally responsive learning environments is the crucible of this PoP and the central focus for leadership actions for change within this OIP. The focus on a networked approach as a change strategy for a reform process is not unique to the MPDOE. Over the past number of years, networks have emerged as promising models of governance and administration to support innovative and responsive change in education systems (Diaz-Gibson et al.,2017; Leithwood & Azah, 2016; Kamp, 2018). However, the mechanisms for actualizing the development of effective network teams remain an ongoing challenge for those tasked with their creation and is a subject of ongoing research and some debate (Evans & Stone-Johnson, 2010; Koliba, 2013; Theisens, 2016).

There is a range of strategies that have been offered up to those who must find a means to develop and support effective network teams, from Theisen's (2016) effective improvisation model, for example, that focuses on specific competencies necessary for civil servants to navigate the challenging conditions and conversations of diverse network teams, to Koliba's (2013) more mechanistic network management model which focuses on policy development and specific network functions. Recognizing the critical role that network teams can play in solving some of the thorniest issues within education and the need to create a clearer picture of the functions of successful networks, Rincon-Gallardo and Fullan (2016) developed a framework of essential network leadership approaches and key network features to guide the work of education policymakers and leaders striving to create effective and inclusive network teams for large scale, sustainable change in education. The framework, based on a review of existing research and emerging data from the use of networks in countries around the globe, focuses on the connections between leadership attributes and actions for the development of inquiry-focused and adaptive network teams dedicated to equity-based education system renewal (Rincon-Gallardo & Fullan, 2016). For the purpose of this OIP, I have adapted Rincon-Gallardo and Fullan's framework, as shown in

Figure 3, as it readily aligns with a criticalist and complex adaptive systems approach to change and

provides a sound foundation to guide my work as I seek change models and learning processes aligned

within the leadership approaches that support the development of an equity-focused network team to

facilitate curricula implementation for inclusive education reform (Edson & McGee, 2016; Rincon-

Gallardo & Fullan, 2016).

Figure 3

Networked Leadership and Key Features for Network Development
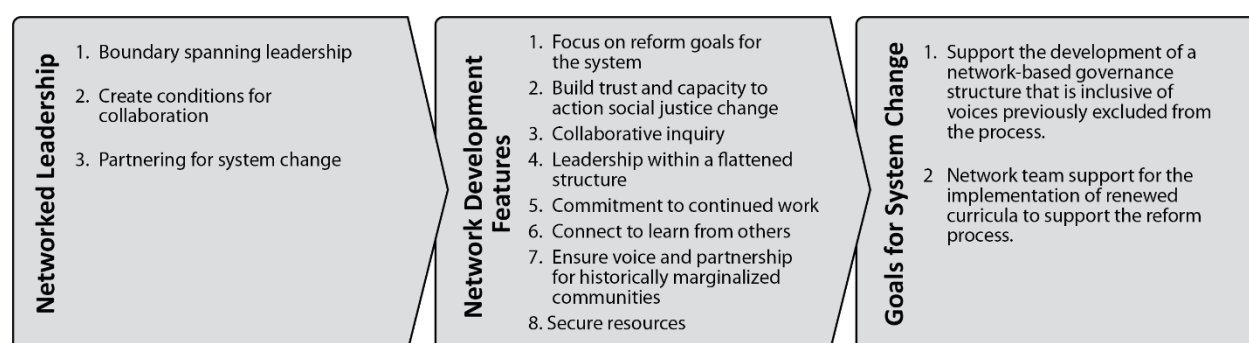
Note. Adapted from "Essential Features of Effective Networks in Education" by S. Rincon-Gallardo and M. Fullan, 2016, *Journal of Professional Capital and Community*, *1*(1), p. 6. Copyright 2016 by Emerald (https://doi.org/10.1108/jpcc-09-2015-0007).

Current State of the Organization

Identifying the circumstances and scenarios that have kept a system in a state where the status

quo has allowed students from historically marginalized communities to remain underserved and on the

periphery of meaningful and engaging learning is a critical first step in moving towards a change model

(Ainscow, 2020). In the Maritime province, numerous studies, reports, and subsequent policies have

indicated an overwhelming desire on the part of almost every constituent of the provincial education

system to move forward with a reform process focused on the dismantling of siloed governance

structures for a more flattened, horizontal model (Glaze, 2018).

Although this extensive review of the current state calls for networked teams with mandates for

the inclusion of previously excluded communities, a full understanding of the leadership models and

actions for this networked change has not fully emerged (Glaze, 2018; Maritime Province, 2014; Maritime Province, 2015). As noted by Rincon-Gallardo and Fullan (2016), "Effective action in network teams does not just happen by bringing them together and encouraging them to get along and collaborate" (p.19). Successful network teams require deliberate and thoughtful development processes and ongoing support (Diaz-Gibson, et al., 2017; Rincon-Gallardo & Fullan, 2016).

The radical shift in the governance and administrative structures in the province's education system was not facilitated by a process that acknowledged the importance of the features and actions of successful network governance. While network teams have been formed at various levels within the system, the means to activate them are still not fully present. School regions, which are critical to the network process as they have the most mobility in connecting to various lateral connections in the system, have not been supported in making this shift in their governance and leadership models (Diaz-Gibson, et al., 2017; Liou et al., 2015). Many of the school regions still have siloed governance structures that are directed by leadership models that tend to be more transactional. As a result, the focus within regional systems is more apt to support bureaucratic and compliance-driven actions. This collection of regional school leadership now operates through a series of reconfigured, joint network teams at the provincial level that include representatives from historically marginalized communities, but reform work for the system, notably curricula implementation, remains somewhat stuck at these tables. Indeed, recently published research on the work to move inclusive education policy reforms to the system noted that the development and support for network teams remains a barrier to reform implementation in the province (Whitley & Hollweck, 2020).

Networked Leadership for Change: A Desired State

The development of an effective network team to support curricula implementation is a critical part of my responsibilities as a director of curriculum development within the restructured MPDOE. Like many civil servants tasked with this important and challenging work, I am mindful that it will take

specific leadership approaches and actions to support the development of a network team to move this aspect of the reform agenda forward (Baker, 2011; Kamp, 2018; Theisens, 2016). While Rincon-Gallardo and Fullan (2016) do not specifically identify models of leadership or learning processes for facilitating network growth, the authors do address leadership attributes and key actions which align with inclusive, distributed, and systems models of leadership. When looking to partnering for systems change, the framework asks leaders to engage in leadership actions that ensure voice and partnership with historically marginalized communities, the building of trust amongst a range of constituents in order to engage in the important work of collaborating to problem-solve for actioning for social justice change, and to ensure an environment is created where there are no barriers to the important work of learning from one another and sharing the knowledge throughout the system (Rincon-Gallardo & Fullan, 2016).

While these deliberate and specific leadership approaches and actions are critical to the development of a network team, the authors caution that they can rarely be successful if conducted by a singular change leader or facilitator. According to Rincon-Gallardo and Fullan (2016), a vital component for network development is skilled, external facilitation. External facilitators are described as the "critical friends…who help navigate the difficult conversations" (p.15) and the varied learning processes that are necessary for the development of an effective and inclusive network team (Rincon-Gallardo & Fullan, 2016). Network team development is complex work, and leaders must be willing to open and share the facilitation and learning process.

Leadership for Partnering

Reaching out to historically marginalized communities for work within the curriculum development division has been a priority for me as a department leader. This work has meant that renewed curricula and supporting resources have been designed with elders and knowledge keepers from Indigenous and African Canadian communities in the province. As a curricula design team, we have made a commitment to step away from positions of privilege and power to create the space for

Indigenous and Afrocentric ways of knowing and being to be central to the curricula design process. This work entailed building the trust for the important relationships to support collaborative learning for the development of the renewed curricula (Hamilton-Hinch et al., 2021).

As I look to replicate these same actions with a larger and more diverse network team, I will need to engage in inclusive leadership actions in alignment with the principles of Two-Eyed Seeing and Sankofa, which support respect for diverse ideas and ways of knowing and being, along with an acknowledgement of the past and its role to inform future decisions (Bartlett, et al., 2015; Watson & Wiggan, 2016). Through the building of trust and strong relationships across multiple spheres and levels within the system, network actors can engage in the learning processes to support the actioning of social justice change (Bartlett, et a., 2015; Macklin, et al., 2021; Watson & Wiggan, 2016).

Creating Conditions for Collaboration

Successful network teams require leadership that supports an environment where expertise and voice from all members are valued within the group (Ainscow, 2020; Azorin et al., 2020). For the type of network team that I am endeavouring to develop, the mixture of senior leaders and actors from various levels and spheres within the organization requires fluid leadership roles where expertise is valued by the tasks at hand rather than by position. Through a distributed leadership model, the aim is to have formal roles and titles of individuals become secondary to the important work of collaboration for the purpose of problem-solving for the system (Azorin et al., 2020). Furthering this model, the network team will need to be engaged in collaborative inquiry to action the series of items that must be considered for the successful planning for the implementation of the renewed curricula. Rincon-Gallardo and Fullan (2016) identify the importance of network teams to engage in critical inquiry to support collaborative action. This work allows for the continued development of critical network capacities, essential for the system evolve to become more responsive, adaptive, and inclusive.

Boundary Spanning Leadership

Moving forward the important work of network teams to support system change requires

opportunities for interaction and collaboration between the various network teams as they engage in

the problem solving and knowledge mobilization (KMb) for the actioning of reform goals (Kapucu & Hu,

2020). This boundary-spanning between the teams is facilitated by systems leadership skills and actions

that ensure the common purposes of change for the system are shared and reinforced to support

impactful ideas and solutions (Kamp, 2018). As a system leader supporting network teams, this also

means securing the resources to ensure this level of network exchange is made possible. However, as I

endeavor this work with colleagues throughout the system who are committed to this change process, it

is important to open the possibilities for a collaborative means to address the allocation of resources

and expertise to ensure the continuation of this important work. Successful network governance is

ultimately about effective collaboration for every aspect of a process that is focused on shifting the

learning trajectories of all students (Baker et al., 2011).

Effective network teams have the power to propel education systems into dynamic learning

organizations that focus their collective energies on supporting inclusive and responsive learning

environments for all students (Ainscow, 2020; Bryk et al., 2011; Gonzales et al., 2020). They can also

support a shift in organizational culture from command-driven and compliance-based to one that

embraces the challenge of ongoing learning and collective efforts for continued improvements

(Leithwood & Azah, 2016). However, there are numerous obstacles to successful network teams. As

Rincon-Gallardo and Fullan (2016) warn their readers, "There are many more ways for networks to go

wrong than to positively improve...education systems" (p.15). To support the shift in the province's

education system, it will take carefully crafted change processes and deliberate actions for change by

leaders and facilitators, such as myself, to help chart the course for the development of a social justice-

focused network team to action the implementation of renewed curricula in support of inclusive education reform.

Organizational Change Readiness

Just as the development of networks to support education systems can fail to yield positive results, reform efforts in public education systems can be fraught with misaligned endeavours and outcomes that fall short of desired expectations (Fullan, 2016; Hargreaves & Ainscow, 2015; Liou et al., 2019). Research for organizational readiness for large-scale change in education, while limited at this time, points to a need for a fulsome exploration of readiness factors that look to organizational valence (i.e., awareness), commitment to change at each level of the organization, collective and individual efficacy, and leadership constructs for change (S. E. Anderson, 2010: Wang et al., 2020). Mindful of the repercussions of poorly constructed change efforts and the need to ascertain the readiness for change within a range of spheres within the organization, when the Maritime province embarked upon its equity-based education reform journey it did so through a series of reviews, studies, and surveys that focused on discerning the wide array of complex external and internal factors that define the organization and its readiness for large-scale change (Glaze, 2018; Maritime Province, 2014).

Recognizing that an inclusive education reform process must include the voices and perspectives of historically marginalized and racialized communities, the MPDOE conducted a provincial survey in 2013 that placed a specific lens on parental and community concerns regarding public education that provided insight on a provincial appetite and readiness for change (Maritime Province, 2014). From information gleaned from this survey, the MPDOE sought to examine leadership perspectives and structural readiness of the MPDOE and the school regions through interview processes that focused on administrative and governance models and communication channels (Glaze, 2018). A 2019 survey of MPDOE staff to gain insight into readiness for a large-scale equity and social justice change process completed the MPDOE's change assessment process (Maritime Province, 2019b).

The MPDOE's decision to engage in a multilevel, equity-focused change readiness assessment process to prepare for the inclusive education reform process aligns with a developing body of literature that seeks to view organizational change readiness as a multifaceted and integrated process within complex systems (Holt & Vardaman, 2013; Rafferty et al., 2013; Vakola, 2013; Weiner, 2009; Weiner et al., 2020). While change readiness is often described as individual behaviour that either supports or resists change efforts, Organizational Readiness for Change (ORC) is a multilevel concept that looks to micro-level individual readiness, meso group or leadership team-based and structural readiness, and macro-organizational readiness that includes various partners and stakeholders, and their perspectives on the organization in relation to a change process (Holt & Vardaman, 2013; Rafferty et al., 2013; Vakola, 2013; Weiner et al. 2020). While there is certainly a wide variation of approaches to ORC in the literature, it is recommended that change leaders closely examine evidence of beliefs, commitments, and change efficacy at each level of an organization to successfully engage in a change (Holt & Vardaman, 2013; Weiner, 2009; Weiner et al. 2020). Beyond a focus on the more traditional and common individual and structural factors for change, Holt and Vardaman (2013) also stress the need for mindfulness of the issues that are precipitating a change process within complex organizations. For the MPDOE, this would entail an ORC framework that could enable a translation of equity and social justice reform objectives across multiple levels and spheres within the organization (Glaze, 2018; Maritime Province, 2015; Spitzer-Shohat & Chin, 2019).

Research and reviews of the effectiveness of varied ORC frameworks, including an extensive review process conducted by Weiner et al (2020), note a lack of frameworks that specifically seek to support equity and diversity (Miake-Lye at al., 2020; Spitzer-Shohat & Chin, 2018). In their review of equity-focused frameworks to support organizational change, including change readiness, Spitzer-Shohat and Chin (2018) were only able to identify 14 equity-focused models from a scoping literature review from 2000 to 2017 and of these, only one provided guidance for equity to be translated through

change processes and change readiness assessments at multiple levels within an organization. The "Roadmap to Reduce Racial and Ethnic Disparities" model was developed to support the elimination of racial and ethnic disparities and to ensure a greater voice for historically marginalized and racialized communities in public health care organizations (Chin et al., 2012; Spitzer-Shohat & Chin, 2019). The model analyses equity-focused organizational change processes through six levels of influence that address the following: (a) connecting quality of services to equity; (b) creating a culture of equity; (c) diagnosing disparities in the organization; (d) determining the need for and the development of interventions to action equity-based change; (e) determining of individual understandings and buy-in for equity-based change; and (f) the development of policies and processes to implement and sustain equity-based change (Chin et al., 2012; Spitzer-Shohat & Chin, 2018). While the framework provides guidance for an equity-focused change at multiple levels of an organization, Spitzer-Shohat and Chin (2019) note that the translation of the framework for change readiness assessments within these levels is not detailed. The framework requires support through an accompanying framework that provides more specificity for change readiness at each level of an organization (Spitzer-Shohat & Chin, 2019).

Holt and Vardaman's (2013) "Dimensions of Readiness at Differing Levels" framework, which was derived from the works of Weiner et al. (2008) and Vakola (2013), stresses the importance of assessing organizational readiness as an interrelated process, with roles and responsibilities of individuals at different levels within the organization all connected to comprise a complex system of individuals and groups who interact to support the functioning and, ultimately, a change process for the organization. The model notes that a focus on the micro-level of an organization requires a change readiness assessment that discerns individual beliefs that a change is correct for a situation, that the change is beneficial to their work, and a belief that leadership is committed to supporting the change. This level of assessment is also important to determine individual change efficacy which provides clarity on beliefs that individuals have the skills and abilities to successfully engage in a change process. At the

meso-level, a change readiness assessment must seek to determine collective commitment at the leadership level regarding organizational resolve to pursue courses of action that will lead to a successful change endeavour. As well, an assessment should identify if there is collective efficacy in capabilities to action various change items for the process and if the climate and structure(s) of the organization are conducive to supporting large-scale change. The macro-level assessment must seek clarity on the perspectives of a broad audience, the people the organization serves and an array of partners and stakeholders, regarding the direction of a change initiative and the capabilities of the organization to action them. This assessment would also look to the potential development of policies and change processes that would need to be created and actioned for the change process. Holt and Vardaman (2013) posit that there is "considerable value to our understanding of [change] readiness by emphasizing the congruence across levels" (p.15) within an organization and the importance of this information in determining change readiness. Indeed, the "Dimensions of Readiness at Differing Levels" emerges as a very useful vehicle to extend the six-step Roadmap to Reduce Racial and Ethnic Disparities framework (Chin et al., 2012).

For this OIP, I have adapted and aligned Holt and Vardaman's (2013) "Dimensions of Readiness at Differing Levels" framework and the "Roadmap for Reducing Racial and Ethnic Disparities" model (Chin et al., 2012), as depicted in Figure 4, to create a comprehensive equity-focused ORC framework that provides a lens to understand the dynamics of multilevel equity-focused change for the MPDOE as the organization engages in inclusive education reform. This model stresses the importance of assessing organizational readiness as an interrelated and iterative process, with roles and responsibilities of individuals within governance structures at different levels within the organization all connected to comprise a complex system of individuals and groups who interact to support a social justice and equity-focused change process for the organization (Chin et al., 2012; Holt & Vardaman, 2013)**.**

Figure 4

ORC Assessment Model for the MPDOE
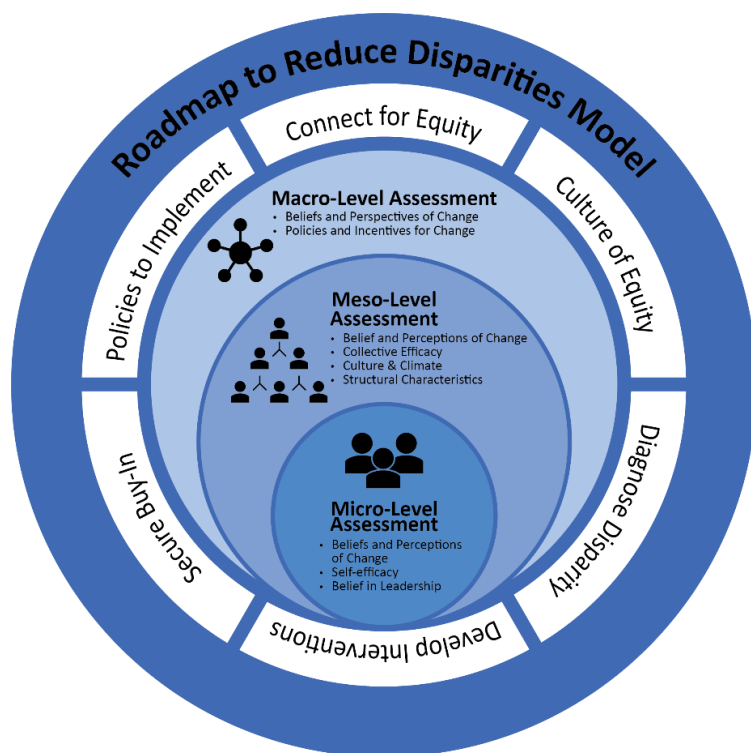
Note. Adapted from "Toward a comprehensive understanding of readiness for change: The case for an expanded conceptualization" by D. Holt and J. Vardaman, 2013, Journal of Change Management, *13*(1), p. 16. (https://doi.org/10.1080/14697017.2013.768426). MPDOE = Maritime Province Department of Education; ORC = organizational readiness for chance.

Macro-Level Change Readiness Assessment: Provincial Survey for Inclusive Education Reform

The MPDOE started its change readiness assessment with the 2013 survey that served to inform the *Disrupting the Status Quo* (Maritime Province, 2014) report. The report emerged as a large-scale societal appraisal of the state of education in the province and a decisive indicator for change readiness. The externally facilitated survey of over 19,000 people, which included students, teachers, parents, and community advocates, identified a series of deficiencies in the system. The report stressed concerns about the quality of student learning, particularly for those students from historically marginalized communities (Maritime Province, 2015). An inclusive environment for learning was a particular focus for

the report, with recommendations to increase support for teachers and schools to better address culturally and linguistically responsive and equitable learning within provincial classrooms. Concerns regarding moving forward to address inclusion were largely tied to reservations about the effectiveness of the governance and administrative structures within the MPDOE and the school regions.

Although the report did not delve too deeply into the cultures of the varied governance structures that comprised the MPDOE and school regions, the report made clear that the majority of survey respondents clearly indicated a need for "greater openness on the part of government departments and school boards to make boundaries more permeable to meeting the needs of the system as a whole" (Maritime Province, 2014, p. 54). The report stated that it did not have sufficient data to fully assess the formal structural and informal (i.e., cultural) aspects of the governance components within the education system and recommended more extensive investigations into these areas to determine readiness to engage in equity-based change (Maritime Province, 2014). While organizational leadership and culture were noted as significant areas of concern, the report was clear that there appeared to be a broad social valence (awareness), commitment, and efficacy for engaging in a large-scale, equity-focused change process (Maritime Province, 2014; Wang et al., 2020). Indeed, the report provided salient evidence that a sizeable percentage of the 19,000 respondents believed that equity-based reform was necessary for provincial education and the system needed to commit to the development of policies to initiate the change process. The report was compelling enough that its recommendations were accepted by the provincial government and used to construct the provincial inclusive education reform policies and action goals (Maritime Province, 2014, 2015).

Meso-Level Change Readiness Assessment: MPDOE/ CFE Leadership Interviews for Inclusive Reform

The authors of the *Disrupting the Status Quo* (Maritime Province, 2014) were correct in their assessment that the format and scope of their investigation could not provide the necessary insight into the culture of leadership within the various levels of the organization (Schein & Schein, 2017). While

organizational culture can be analyzed at several levels, through visible artifacts, beliefs and values, and underlying assumptions, as Schein and Schein (2017) contend, "unless you dig down to the level of assumptions, you cannot really discover the artifacts, values, and norms" (p. 56). This level of assessment necessitates an in-depth analysis of the various functions within the governing systems of an organization (Schein & Schein, 2017; Wang et al., 2020). Dr. Avis Glaze was contracted by the MPDOE to conduct an in-depth review of governance functions and administrative practices for the MPDOE and CFE. The review, which consisted of a series of interviews with leadership at the department of education and the school regions, was to delve into the responsibilities, roles, and operating structures within the governing bodies of each level of the organization, with a particular focus on accountability, effectiveness, and transparency of the work within these governance structures for readiness to support an equity-focused change process (Glaze, 2018).

Engaging with the review process through an investigative lens that focused on how the MPDOE's governing systems supported student learning and achievement and equity for all students, Dr. Glaze's (2018) report painted a dire picture of the state of the governance operations within the provincial education system. The report noted issues regarding confusion over the roles and responsibilities of MPDOE and CFE staff. Interviews revealed that there was an overarching perception of a lack of transparency and accountability within both levels of governance. Dr. Glaze characterized the cultures of governance at both the provincial and regional level as one that engendered "hurt feelings and mistrust, frustration and cynicism" (Glaze, 2018, p. 4). There was, however, certain awareness and acceptance amongst interviewees that the current structure and culture of governance and administration was not tenable nor acceptable to support the learning needs of students in the province, particularly those from historically marginalized communities. There was also a resounding commitment and readiness for change from all levels of leadership, with a focus on restructuring the system and its processes to be more aligned and unified in the tasks of supporting provincial inclusive

education reform (Glaze, 2018) As a result of this change readiness assessment, Dr. Glaze (2018) made a series of recommendations that were accepted by the MPDOE that resulted in the establishment of a networked model of governance at the MPDOE.

Micro-Level Change Readiness Assessment: Employee Survey for Inclusive Reform Change Readiness

Striving to move towards a more granular or micro view of the change readiness process, the MPDOE conducted the third component of its change readiness assessment through an employee survey (Maritime Province, 2019b). The survey was developed using the Organizational Change Questionnaire on Climate, Processes, and Readiness for change (OCQ-C,P,R) assessment (Bouckenooghe et al., 2009; Clinton-McHarg, et al., 2016). The OCQ-C,P,R is a psychometric assessment that is based on interpersonal interactions and relationships that shape people's readiness for change (Bouckenooghe et al., 2009). The assessment seeks to determine elements of change that typically reside in cognitive, emotional, and intentional readiness for change that is explored through an assessment of the quality of change communication, trust and relationships with leadership, support for change, beliefs in individual skills sets related to supporting change, and the nature of relationships within the working culture (Bouckenooghe et al., 2009; Clinton-McHarg, et al., 2016).

The results of the OCQ-C,P,R survey for my team in the curriculum development division yielded valuable information on positive perceptions and attitudes for an equity-focused change process but also identified significant concerns regarding internal communications within the organization for the purpose of change processes (Maritime Province, 2019b). Staff noted that while there was enthusiasm to engage in equity-based reform and an overall belief that the MPDOE was capable to support large-scale social justice-based change, many identified that they required additional support to navigate the new governance structures and models for working (Maritime Province, 2019b). This final survey of MPDOE provided much-needed information to address the learning processes and supports that would

be necessary for a successful, equity-focused change process. More information on the survey results

can be found in Appendix D

The change readiness process that the MPDOE engaged in to prepare for large-scale reform

provided clear evidence of a need for equity-focused, social justice change along with an overwhelming

commitment to the change process from every sphere and level within the organization. As well, the

change readiness assessments identified the pathways for the development of social justice-focused

policies, necessary changes to governance models to support a more equitable system, and the need to

address the development of a more inclusive and social justice-oriented working culture. The analysis of

the MPDOE's readiness for change using the equity-focused, multilevel ORC model provides a valuable

lens to interrogate change readiness information that will serve to define the various aspects of the

change plan to address the PoP that will be explored in Chapters 2 and 3 of the OIP (Chin et al., 2012;

Holt & Vardaman, 2013).

Conclusion

The exploration of the PoP in this chapter identifies a change process that must be grounded in

the hard work of shifting the culture of a provincial educational governance system to one of trust and

collective responsibility for inclusive and meaningful change. As one of the change leaders facilitating

this process, this is the important work of listening to and absorbing the wisdom from colleagues and

partners, including the communities that the system has consistently disadvantaged, to find the

pathways for a more responsive culture of networked governance to enact curricula implementation

planning. The identified leadership position and leadership-focused vision for change, that are situated

within a reconceptualized critical paradigm, provide the structure to explore the guiding questions that

will serve to shape the design of solutions necessary to address the PoP. Chapter 2 will detail the varied

components that expand and build upon the network development framework and the organizational

analysis that will support the development of OIP solutions.

Chapter 2: Planning and Development

This chapter expands the exploration and interrogation of the PoP through leadership approaches and a social justice-focused change framework that serve to provide a foundation for the change process. Through the aligned leadership and a selected change framework, possible solutions for the PoP are explored. An analysis of the potential solutions is undertaken through a close examination of key change factors that provide further insight into varied organizational reform challenges and the levels of support that will need to be present with a selected solution. The final section of the chapter considers the moral underpinnings of an ethical leadership praxis, which is critical to navigating the challenges of an equity-focused and social justice-based reform initiative.

Leadership Approaches to Change

While there are few examples in the literature of a defined leadership praxis in support of educational change through interorganizational collaboration, much of the research and literature point to the skills and practices of leaders who are able to build collective capacity and trust amongst diverse actors, develop wide-ranging partnerships, to value skills and capacities in others, and to share decision-making throughout a system (Azorin et al.,2020; Diaz-Gibson, et al., 2017; Leithwood, 2019; Theisens, 2016). In their investigation of leadership for inter-organizational collaborative education networks, Diaz-Gibson et al. (2017) characterized network leadership as unique from single-agency leadership as it entails facilitation "to successfully address the unity-diversity tension [through] bridging between member differences... and capacitating members to lead actions" (p. 1044) to address the most pressing social-educational issues. These network leadership attributes and actions, with a focus on supporting significant shifts in philosophies and practices within an education system that could serve to substantially alter the trajectory of learning and well-being for some of the most vulnerable learners, provide this author with clear leadership approaches for change within this OIP.

A network leadership model, supported by inclusive, distributed, and systems leadership approaches as articulated through a complex criticalist lens, has the means to provide an essential foundation for the bridging of professional and relational silos to facilitate the capacity of MPDOE network members to tackle the implementation of the renewed curricula for the province's reform process (Ainscow, 2020; Azorin et al., 2020; Kamp, 2018; Rincon-Gallardo & Fullan, 2016). This is the important work of engaging in community-inclusive social learning processes to ensure voice and agency for historically marginalized communities through honouring Two-Eyed Seeing and Sankofa principles in the decision-making processes, along with the development of network learning cultures that address the issues of mistrust and cynicism that have previously impeded any meaningful change within the province's education system (Bartlett et al., 2015; F. Wang, 2018; Watson & Wiggan, 2016). These leadership approaches, as noted in Figure 5, will support the articulation of the social justice-based goals that will be central to the network team members as they build the important relationships necessary to action provincial education reform.

Figure 5

Network Leadership Model

Inclusive Leadership

In the pursuit of overcoming the barriers of exclusion and privilege that have served to marginalize and subjugate entire communities within education systems, the practice of inclusive leadership is often defined by those who strive to create working and learning environments where all constituents of an education system, particularly those who have been marginalized, are valued with voice and agency (Campbell, 2020; Ryan, 2014). Inclusive leaders also endeavour to ensure that each individual is recognized and valued for their unique perspectives, lived experiences, and ways of knowing and being (Campbell, 2020; Ryan 2006, 2014). Northouse and Lee (2022) note in their most recent writing on inclusive leadership in education that the core value of this leadership approach is the fostering of interpersonal relationships for the purpose of all individuals to be able to "fully and meaningfully contribute to shared goals...and do so...without relinquishing any part of their identity" (p. 94). For the important work of network team development at the MPDOE, inclusive leaders must engage in practices that create learning and working environments where collaboration for innovation and problem solving for a shared vision is actioned through harnessing the unique ideas, perspectives, and contributions of all members (Campbell, 2020; Chorbot-Mason & Aramovich, 2020).

For the newly configured network teams at the MPDOE, it is essential that social learning processes are enacted to address the issues of mistrust that have persisted within the varied spheres and levels of the system as a result of the previous configuration of the organization (Chrobot-Mason & Aramocivh, 2020). This is the work of building relationships and connections within network teams through honouring different ways of knowing and being (Antonacopoulou & Chiva, 2007). For members of the team from Indigenous and African Canadian communities, this would entail incorporating Indigenous learning circles focusing on Two-Eyed Seeing and Sankofa practices of honouring the past when looking to conversations about innovation and change for the future (Bartlett et al., 2015; Hatcher et al., 2009; Watson & Wiggan, 2016). Extending the intergroup dynamics of network teams would also

entail ensuring that each member's personal perspectives and working cultures are validated and honoured within the group. Through these practices, inclusive leaders are able to ensure that individual members of a network team are able to engage in the collective work of supporting social justice change within the provincial education system (Chrobot-Mason & Aramovich, 2020; Shields & Hesbol, 2020).

Distributed Leadership

Ainscow and Sandill (2010) and Ryan (2006) point to distributed leadership as an important approach for education systems that endeavour to create the organizational conditions necessary for the development of inclusive practices. Derived from social psychology (Bolden, 2011; Gronn, 2011; Spillane, 2006), distributed leadership supports a culture of learning and shared responsibility for collective action through relationship-building that validates individual expertise. As noted through much of the literature on network teams within education, distributed leadership offers an essential theoretical and practical framing to understand the functionality and roles of team members through the nurturing of collaborative critical inquiry and problem-solving for shared commitment for change (Azorin et al., 2020; Baker et al., 2011).

Leaders who engage in a distributed approach ensure that leadership is extended throughout an organization based on expertise and not on position or authority. Indeed, a distributed leadership approach provides the necessary scaffolding to support inclusive leadership practices for the development of effective network teams at the MPDOE (Hammershaimb, 2018). As these teams are comprised of members from various levels and spheres within the organization, including actants from communities that have been historically excluded from decision-making practices within the system, it is essential that all members of a team are supported and empowered to collaborate for innovative problem-solving. This is the important work of relationship building with a dedicated focus on Indigenous and African epistemologies, Two-Eyed Seeing and Sankofa, to support a shared commitment and collective efficacy for meaningful social justice change within the system (Bartlett et al., 2015;

Gram-Hanssen, 2021; Watson & Wigan, 2016). Distributed leadership practices are essential to support the creation of learning environments that provide the support and resources necessary for newly created network teams to engage in the important work of equity-based system reform through the implementation of renewed curricula (Azorin et al., 2020).

Systems Leadership

As Mowat (2019) asserts in his analysis of large-scale social justice reform efforts in education systems, system-wide capacity must be developed through both distributed and systems leadership approaches. Informed by systems thinking, systems leadership is often defined through actions that foster communication and consultation across a system to ensure knowledge sharing for the reinforcement of key priorities that enable change (Fullan, 2020; Kamp, 2018; Liou et al., 2019). System leaders are adept at mobilizing system change through the development of adaptive spaces where shared knowledge and innovations of various network groups can be shared for the benefit of an entire organization (Kamp, 2018; Liou et al., 2019). For the development and success of network teams at the MPDOE, a systems leadership approach is essential to ensure that communities, particularly those that have not previously been included in decision-making processes, partners, and stakeholders, are involved in creating and sustaining system change (Edson & McGee, 2016). Without systems leadership, networks can easily engage in actions that fail to connect to the critical components of change that a system demands to successfully traverse the challenging journey of social justice reform (Kamp, 2018). For network teams at the MPDOE, this must include the essential work of valuing and embracing the cultures, beliefs, and lived experiences of the province's historically racialized and marginalized communities (Bartlett et al., 2015; Hamilton-Hinch et al., 2021; Watson & Wiggan, 2016).

The development and actions of networks have the means to reinvent leadership as a practice, particularly when looking to large-scale, social justice change within an education system like the MPDOE (Kamp, 2018). The complexity of social justice-based issues within education coupled with the

challenges of governing functions within education governing systems demands models of leadership

that value and empower a wide range of system actors within network teams to work collaboratively

and engage in leading change (Diaz-Gibson et al., 2017; Mowat, 2019). A networked leadership

approach, scaffolded by inclusive, distributed, and systems leadership approaches, provides the

necessary guidance and support for the development of effective network teams to action change for

the provincial education system.

Framework for Leading the Change Process

The conditions and change factors that need to be present for a successful transition to an

equity-based and social justice-focused approach to leadership through networked governance models

can be challenging to discern and activate within an organization (Diaz-Gibson, et al., 2017; Rincon-

Gallardo & Fullan, 2016; Theisens, 2016). This is frequently attributed to the complexity of public

education systems like the MPDOE which are often characterized by intersecting cultural,

socioeconomic, and political constructs that are interwoven within a web of evolving governance

structures (Fullan, 2020; Glaze, 2018). To support a better understanding of the complexity of change

factors within an education system, a change framework would need to be able to both interrogate and

illuminate characteristics of organizational culture and structures, leadership constructs, and the roles,

behaviours, and learning needs of a range of diverse actors, along with the change goals and requisite

actions (Capper, 2019; Deszca et al., 2020; Stroh, 2015).

Mindful of the myriad of scenarios that precipitate and endure within change processes,

organizational change is often described through the lenses of magnitude and complexity of change

types (Deszca et al., 2020; Lewis, 2016; Stroh, 2015). Deszca et al, (2020) highlight organizational models

of change that range from minor shifts that are encapsulated in the continuous tuning of processes to

maintain small, adaptive changes that emerge from modest change factors to more radical or

discontinuous change that is attributed to a planned evolution or a reimagining of an organization based

on a significant performance issue. Lewis (2016) posits that the complexity of change within

organizations must also be mindful of the multiplicity and multidimensional aspects of changes that can

occur within a system. Stroh (2015) furthers this premise with an argument that organizations that strive

to engage in social justice-based change must be mindful of key challenges to the process that often

encompass the ongoing need for clarity of vision, motivation, collaboration, and continuous learning. A

consideration of the extent and purpose of change within an organization is vital for the selection of a

change framework (Stroh, 2015). As this PoP is nested within a complex, equity-based reform process

that is defined by radical and multidimensional change, the selection of a change model must provide

the scope, flexibility, and scaffolding to support the challenging scenarios that inform the impetus for

the MPDOE's reform process and the varied factors of change that define the development of a diverse

network team for actioning of curricula implementation.

As described in Chapter 1, the MPDOE has struggled over the years to successfully implement

inclusive and antiracist reform in the province (Glaze, 2018). The current reform plan is the first in the

history of the MPDOE to look to a governance restructuring that brings together leaders from every

sphere within the system to engage in the important work of problem-solving to determine optimal

models for inclusive reforms measures, including the implementation of renewed curricula (Glaze, 2018;

Maritime Province, 2015). As my PoP notes, the work of leaders like me in the system is to develop and

action plans to support the development of network teams with learning cultures that can facilitate this

essential work. For this important aspect of the reform process, a change framework must be able to

scaffold and support the multitude of change processes within a large, complex system and support the

development of a social justice-focused learning culture within diverse and newly formed network

teams. With these criteria for change, Peter Senge's Learning Organization Framework (1990) and

Nadler and Tushman's (1989) congruence model appear to hold promise to support this process.

The Learning Organization

In Peter Senge's (1990) seminal book, *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization,* Senge argued that organizations needed to evolve to meet the complex demands of a modern world. Critical to this evolution was the need to develop organizations that supported their members' abilities to engage in meaningful learning. Senge (1990) particularly focused on 'generative learning' that enhances individuals' abilities to create and initiate innovations on the part of an organization. Through the practice and mastery of five key disciplines that encompass systems thinking, mental models, personal mastery, team learning, and shared vision, Senge (1990) provided a series of models for organizations to develop a new organizational culture to align individual knowledge and talents for the benefit of organizational performance. Eschewing traditional, hierarchical management systems, the learning organizational framework was designed to usher in a business model that could navigate the most tumultuous environments through ongoing growth and evolution (Senge, 1990).

While Senge's (1990) learning organization framework would appear to have attributes that would support a model for the development of networks teams that are at the heart of my PoP, there are some concerning elements that emerge with Senge's learning organization framework. Fillian et al. (2015), Fielding (2001), and Caldwell (2012) posit in their critiques that the framework has few practical mechanisms for activating the five key disciplines. Beyond concerns regarding the necessary means to activate the foundational disciplines of the framework, Fielding (2001) and Caldwell (2012) also argue that Senge failed to consider the pervasiveness of the policies and power constructs within most large organizations that have largely kept marginalized peoples from having access to decision-making within the organizations. Where my PoP is set within a reform process that must focus on issues of inequities within a complex system undergoing multiple change processes, this framework has limitations regarding the necessary support for the myriad of factors that must be considered for the development of network teams engaging in work of social justice reform (Caldwell, 2012; Fillion et al., 2015).

The Congruence Model and Models of Liberatory Learning

Nadler and Tushman's (1989) congruence model is well noted as a flexible inquiry tool that

helps illuminate the varied components of complex organizations for leaders who strive to create

collaborative pathways for inquiry, problem-solving, and implementation of system-wide change

(Deszca et al., 2020; Emery, 2008). The model consists of three main elements. The first is input, which

looks to social forces such as the environment, resources, and history of an organization, often through

a PESTEL or a similar evaluative framework analysis. This is a vital component of this model as it ensures

that key issues relating to historical scenarios that have defined the evolution of an organization and the

current environment are always at the forefront of decision-making for change. The second component

is found within the model's interpretation of the organization, which is defined by four components: the

work of an organization, the formal structures and processes, the people, and the informal structures

and processes (including culture) (Nadler & Tushman, 1989). The third is the output that looks to either

a pattern of activities or behaviours in an organization that serve to address deficiencies. The model

emphasizes that the most effective application of its processes is through thoughtful consideration of

the nature of the change, the members of the organization and the wide range of partners that they

work with, and the culture(s) that has evolved to define the system—an essential model to support

change for an organization that seeks to shift its learning and leadership culture to better meet the

needs of its most vulnerable members (Nadler & Tushman, 1989). This is a framework that does not

provide a prescribed set of key change factors but instead allows an organization to thoughtfully design

and implement pathways for solutions to address its unique needs.

The heart of the congruence model is largely within the transformation process that relies upon

the components of the input process and strategy as defined by the organization to move a change

process forward (Mercer Delta Consulting, 2004). Within this aspect of the framework, the alignment or

fit between each component of the transformation process, the diversity of people, the complexity of

work, the varied structures of the organization, and cultures, must evolve in a process that allows a change process to occur that meets the individual needs of members of an organization and supports the necessary change processes that the organization is striving to implement (Mercer Delta Consulting, 2004). While Nadler and Tushman (1989) note the value of the transformational process to guide large-scale change in a complex organization, the authors' caution that there are limitations to the process due to the complexity of transitions and associated learning needs that could be informing a change process over time. Indeed, Stroh (2015), in his examination of issues surrounding complexity within organizational change, argues that without careful consideration of the varied constructs that support ongoing learning within an organization, particularly one committed to social justice reform, failure is often the outcome.

Mindful of the complex change factors that must be considered for a PoP that is focused on the development of network teams to support an equity-based reform process that must centre and value the lived experiences, cultures, knowledges, and beliefs of historically marginalized and racialized communities, I must seek a learning organizational change framework that is developed to meet the unique learning needs of this new collaborative and inclusive public governance scenario. As Antonacopoulou et al. (2019) posit in their analysis of learning frameworks within organizations, modes of learning must move beyond the common scripts that simply address knowledge acquisition and behaviour change to embrace learning models that value "how the social complexity of learning across levels and units of analysis can be understood" (p.306) and incorporated into an organization dedicated to enacting meaningful change. The Social Action, Leadership, and Transformation (SALT) model for the development of socially conscious leadership and the organizational learning framework of Argyris and Schon appears to hold the most promise in this regard (Argyris & Schon, 1996; Museus et al., 2017). The SALT model embraces equity focused leadership learning that provides the space for critical consciousness in personal growth and knowledge acquisition for committed actions of social justice

change, and Argyris and Schon's double and deutero loop learning models support liberatory learning for dynamic change practices (Argyris & Schon, 1996; Museus et al., 2017).

Liberatory Learning for Advancing Social Justice Reform

Derived from the Social Change Model (SCM) framework for leadership development that focuses on social justice change through collaborative actions of socially conscious leaders, the SALT model is an expanded process that asks leaders to centre equity-based leadership practices within a sphere of on-going inquiry into varied system oppressions along with a dedicated focus on their own positionality within collective actions for change – a model keenly aligned with the leadership learning needs of the MPDOE (Glaze, 2018; Harper & Kezar, 2021; Museus et al., 2017). The model, as depicted in Figure 6, looks to a series of interconnected processes that require leaders to engage in the following: (a) have empathy for enhanced understanding of oppressed communities; (b) an understanding of the historic and contemporary forms of oppression; (c) a commitment to advance social justice; (d) to seek equity within inclusive leadership settings; (e) to embrace collective action for change; (f) to have the courage to confront oppression; and (g) to coalesce understandings of systemic inequity and act for meaningful change (Museus et al, 2017).

The interconnected processes of the SALT model, while invaluable to support the development of collective leadership dedicated to social justice action, can prove challenging to enact for network teams (Frantell et al., 2019). To successfully engage in SALT model learning, participants must be prepared to explore controversial issues and engage in thoughtful planning to enact social justice change (Museus et al., 2017). These types of conversations and actions can elicit strong emotional responses that require an openness to delve into and question personal values, beliefs, and assumptions (Buckley & Quaye, 2016; Rast et al., 2020). This type of social learning demands expertly facilitated learning processes that support the development of a network learning culture capable of deep listening, honest sharing, thoughtful reflection, and critical inquiry (Frantell et al., 2019). This level of

professional facilitation will need to be factored into a network learning process that asks for

participants to engage in actioning equity-focused change through the SALT model (Museus et al., 2017).

Figure 6

SALT Model

Note. Adapted from *The Social Action, Leadership, and Transformation (SALT) Model* by S. Museus, N. Lee, K. Calhoun, L. Sanchez-Parkinson and M. Ting, 2017, Ann Arbor, MI: p. 5. Ann Arbor, MI: Copyright 2017 by National Center for Institutional Diversity (https://lsa.umich.edu/content/dam/ncid-assets/ncid-documents/publications/Museus%20et%20al%20(2017)%20SALT%20Model%20Brief.pdf).

Supporting a similar action-focused model for change, Argyris and Schon (1996) approach

organizational learning through the context of the relationship between knowledge and action. The

authors describe double-loop learning as a commitment to inquiry and questioning of norms and values

to address a situation or necessary actions within an organization (Argyris, 2003). Deutero learning is the

metacognitive process that can be employed in the double-loop process to seek greater clarity on how

new ways of thinking can create actionable strategies for change within an organization (Argyris &

Schon, 1996). The combination of the SALT model (Museus et al., 2017) with Argyris and Schon's (1996)

double-loop and deutero learning supports the process of learning that aligns with the complex

criticalist approach to inclusive and social justice change that underscores my PoP.

While both Senge's (1990) learning organization framework and Nadler and Tushman's (1989)

congruence model provide avenues for change within complex organizations undergoing radical

multidimensional reform processes, it is the flexibility of the more comprehensive congruence model

with its inclusion of dedicated mechanisms for discerning and valuing the varied social forces that

influence and define many organizations that offers the most significant potential for the development

of a responsive change plan that aligns with an equity-based approach that is essential for this PoP.

However, as the congruence model does not provide specific learning or solution strategies that my PoP

requires for the development of a diverse, equity-focused network team, the change framework must

include models for learning that facilitate leadership development that can confront systemic

oppression and advance social justice reform efforts for the system. The SALT model, which centres

leadership learning on the development of critical consciousness for actions dedicated to advancing

social justice, and Argyris and Schon's learning organization model which offers the necessary

intellectual tools for collaborative, team-based problem solving that is critical for the actioning of the

social justice change component of the SALT Model, together, emerge as effective and complementary

learning strategies (Argyris & Schon, 1996: Museus et al., 2017). Indeed, the two learning models,

integrated with the transformational process of the congruence model (see Figure 7), provide the

necessary scaffolding for leadership learning within a responsive and equity-focused change framework

that aligns with a networked leadership praxis to support the development of a MPDOE network team

with the skills and dispositions to facilitate the implementation of renewed curricula in support of

system-wide inclusive education reform (Argyris & Schon, 1996; Museus et al., 2017; Nadler & Tushman,

1989).

Figure 7

Congruence Model and Liberatory Learning for Social Justice Leadership
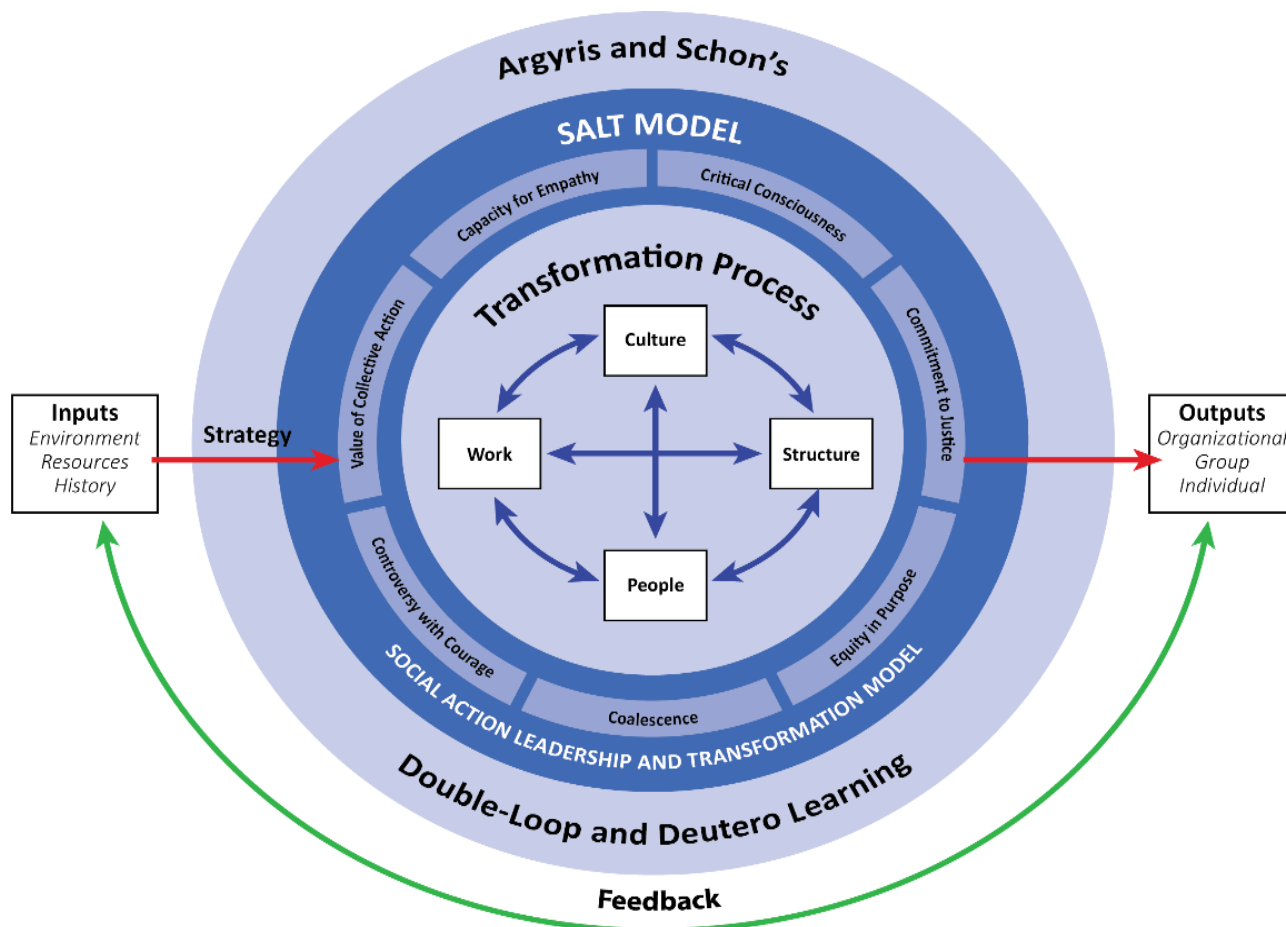
Note. Adapted from "Original Frame Bending: Principles for Managing Reorientation," by D. Nadler and M. Tushman, 1989, *The Academy of Management Executive*, *3*(3), p. 195. Copyright 1989 by Academy of Management (https://doi.org/10.5465/AME.1989.4274738).

What to Change? Critical Organizational Analysis

While the complexity of large-scale organizational change requires change leaders to critically examine and determine change frameworks and learning processes for an organization, there is also a critical need to understand what needs to change (Deszca et al., 2020; Stroh, 2015). The future desired state for the MPDOE and for education in the province is to achieve the reform goals that outline a restructuring of the system to address issues of inequity and systemic racism (Maritime Province, 2015;

Glaze, 2018). A critical organizational analysis typically includes a consideration of relevant research, change readiness information, and an analysis of key organizational components to determine a clear picture of the current state of the organization and what the change process will hopefully achieve. The framework described in the section above will be used to conduct the organizational analysis and identify the gaps which currently exist between the current state and the desired reform goals within the MPDOE, school regions, and education partners. This analysis will identify the needed changes within the organization to achieve the desired outcome of this OIP for developing an effective, diverse network team to support the implementation of renewed curricula.

   As identified in Chapter 1, the MPDOE conducted an extensive survey with over 19,000 respondents from various spheres within the provincial education system to gauge concerns and desired changes for the system which resulted in a comprehensive reform plan (Maritime Province, 2014, 2015). This initial attempt by the province to discern concerns regarding gaps in the services of the education system led to a second investigation by Dr. Glaze (2018), which resulted in the *Raise the Bar* report. With this report, it was clear that there was an urgency for change within provincial education governance structures and a readiness on the part of respondents, many of whom held various leadership positions within the organization, to engage in this process. In addition to these macro and meso system assessments, the change readiness assessment survey was conducted at the micro-level by the MPDOE to determine the climate for change within curricula development division at the department (Maritime Province, 2019b). The results of this survey indicated that staff were eager to support and actively participate in this change process (Maritime Province, 2019b). However, it needs to be noted that as the selected network team will be comprised of members from other spheres within the organization, this author will not be able to discern their interest in supporting this specific work until the network team begins to meet. This level of analysis will need to be undertaken through the monitoring and evaluation processes that are discussed in Chapter 3.

Utilizing the congruence model (Nadler & Tushman, 1989) in alignment with the SALT model (Museus et al., 2017) and Argyris and Schon's (1996) organizational learning approach for framing the change process is the most thorough and encompassing method to analyse the changes that need to occur within the MPDOE to ensure the successful development of diverse network teams to support the implementation of reform efforts in the province. The first two components of the congruence model, the input and the transformational process, provide valuable lenses for discerning the key elements of change for organizational improvement while the output component shines a light on the desired outcome for the system.

Input

As noted in Chapter 1, the elements of the Input component of the model are vital to a thorough understanding of the various forces—historical, economic, and sociocultural—that have impacted the evolution and current state of an organization. As evident in the intercultural-focused SPEELIT analysis in Chapter 1, the MPDOE has arrived at a juncture where the piecemeal and half measure approaches to addressing inequities and systemic racism within the system needs to be addressed through comprehensive reform policies that includes curricula reform and the restructuring of governance to ensure that all students, particularly those from historically marginalized communities, have access to responsive and inclusive learning environments.

Formal Structures to Support Change

Organizations will often make changes to varied structures and systems to support a change process (Lewis, 2016). As Descza et al. (2020) note, these changes can act to facilitate changes in behaviours of individuals within the organization and it can help the system to become more agile as it navigates change. The deficiencies within the governance system that Dr. Glaze (2018) critiqued in her report resulted in a directive for substantive changes to the system that would ultimately see efforts towards the development of a flattened, horizontal model of governance supported by multi-level

networked team. As research clearly identifies, the creation of network teams, comprised of education

leaders from various spheres within the organization in support of a stronger, more collaborative, and a

more unified education system is critical for shifting a system to be more responsive and equitable,

particularly for those who have been historically marginalized in the system (Ball & Junemann, 2012;

Diaz-Gibson et al., 2017; Gonzalez et al., 2020; Theisens, 2016). The development of network teams is a

critical structural change for the MPDOE's governance. Network teams are the bridge to breach the

chasm between policies and tangible, sustainable change for the province's education system.

The People: Individuals, Partners, and Stakeholders

Engaging in a stakeholders' analysis, as noted by Deszca et al. (2020) asks for leaders of change

to consider those who have the power to enact various aspects of the change within their organization,

who will be impacted by the change, who has to change their practice and or behaviours as a result of

the change, and who can move or stymie the process. As was detailed in the MPDOE investigative

reports and reform policies, the beneficiaries of this change process are the students of the province,

particularly those from historically marginalized communities. To support this change process, leaders

from various spheres within the system, many of whom had not previously been invited to participate in

decision-making tables, now have the opportunity to engage in collaborative actions for implementing

reform change through new network teams. (Glaze, 2018). For change facilitators who are supporting

the development of these new governance structures, this is the important work of ensuring that the

voices of communities that have been previously excluded from any form of governance within the

system are present and heard within network teams. To ensure that this gap in governance is addressed,

as a change leader and facilitator in this process, this requires creating a learning culture within a

network team that ask members from dominant cultures to step back to provide the space for diverse

perspectives (Ainscow, 2020; Hamilton-Hinch et al., 2021).

Culture and Informal Structures

In her report on the governance and administrative structures of the provincial education

system, Dr. Glaze (2018) noted that her recommendations for change were predicated on issues of

mistrust within the system. For the development of an effective network team to support curricula

implementation, this is the work of bridging the gap between the relational silos through engaging in

social learning processes to build strong intergroup dynamics (Reed, et al., 2010). To facilitate this

culture of learning, the SALT model provides an avenue to develop individual team members' sense of

self and understanding of how varied worldviews influence ways of thinking and knowing within

oppressive systems (Museus et al., 2017.) By engaging in the SALT leadership development model,

network team members can engage in dialogue for the interrogation of beliefs and practices that

support social learning and collective empowerment and agency for social justice action (Museus et al.,

2017). This model of learning and leadership development provides the space for Indigenous and

Afrocentric ways of knowing and being to facilitate the development of network learning cultures that

support inclusive, reflective, and collective decision-making for provincial curricula implementation

(Ainscow, 2020; Hatcher et al., 2009; Watson & Wiggan, 2016).

The Work

As Fullan and Quinn (2016) note, the work of "cultivating collaborative cultures is at the heart of

systems transformation" (p. 12). However, as many authors posit, the process of engaging in

collaborative cultures within networks teams is not, on its own, sufficient for engaging in meaningful

change (Ainscow & Sandhill, 2010; Kamp, 2018; Rincon-Gallardo & Fullan, 2016; Theisens, 2016). There

must be a clear, purposeful drive and mechanisms for engaging in problem-solving and decision-making

practices for collaborative teams (Wang, 2018). For a network team to engage in the important work of

collectively problem-solving and planning for the implementation of renewed curricula in support of

provincial reform, the team will need to learn how to engage in collaborative and inquiry and problem-

solving. Argyris and Schon's (1996) learning models focus on the development of a learning climate that

fosters the abilities of learners to become more competent in taking actions for change while

simultaneously reflecting on these acts to learn for future inquiries. This is the intellectual engagement

that emerges from double-loop and deutero learning where the individual learner's core beliefs are

subject to inquiry and reflection for enriched and ongoing learning that supports effective actions for

meaningful change (Argyris & Schon, 1996).

Output

Previous attempts by the MPDOE to engage in inclusive education reform failed to yield any

substantive change in the system. Through a more encompassing reform process, the MPDOE is

endeavouring to shift its governing structure with the development of diverse network leadership teams

to facilitate the implementation of curricula to support inclusive and culturally responsive learning

environments. The system must be supported in this process by leaders who are committed to inclusive

and collaborative endeavours across varied levels of the system (Glaze, 2018). It is the fit of a social

justice learning-focused transformational process that holds promise for the development of a network

team with the leadership competencies necessary to action this implementation process (Nadler &

Tushman, 1989; Stroh, 2015).

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Possible Solutions to Address the Problem of Practice

</div>

The following section explores three potential solutions to address a problem of practice that

requires the development of a network team with the leadership dispositions and skills to support the

implementation of renewed curricula as part of a system-wide inclusive education reform process. Of

the ten network teams that were formed through governance reform, the Program Coordinator

Network Team (PCNT) has been selected to support this work as it is comprised of program and curricula

leaders from the CFE, the MPDOE, and education partners from Indigenous and African Canadian

communities (see Figure 8).

Figure 8

Program Coordinator Network Team
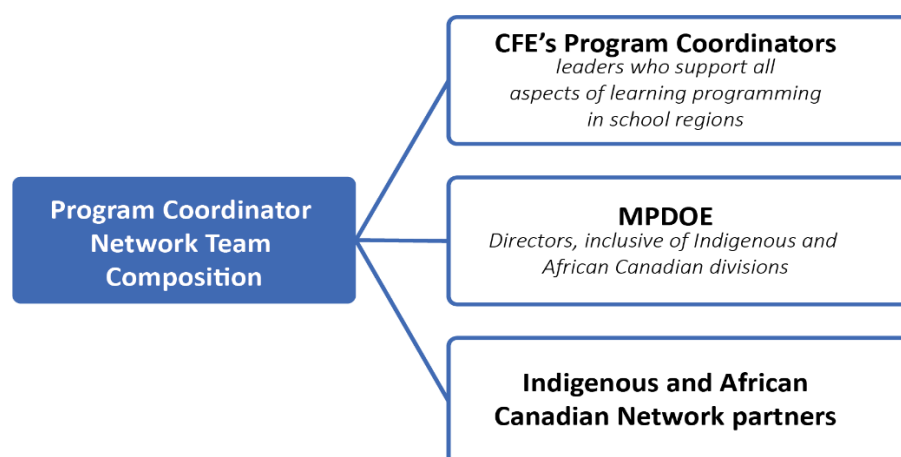
Note. CFE = Centres for Education; MPDOE Education= Maritime Province Department of Education.

The three proposed solutions are as follows: (a) network team development through a collaborative review of a provincial curricula implementation plan; (b) network team development through a review process of the renewed curricula; and (c) a sole focus on the development of the key network features for the new PCNT. The third solution is combined with the other two solutions to create a proposed solution to the PoP. Each of the solutions is explored for their potential benefits, impact, risks, and the resources that would be needed to consolidate and sustain the work. All three solutions provide opportunities for the building of necessary working relationships between actors from various spheres within the organization to delve into understandings of worldviews, perspectives, and ways of knowing and being, and to engage in the critical inquiry and problem-solving for the development of a curricula implementation plan. The identified network leadership approaches, inclusive, distributed, and systems-based, will support and guide the development and execution of the proposed solutions.

Solution 1: Collaborative Planning

The curricula development division at the MPDOE engaged an ad hoc team of teachers and knowledge keepers from Indigenous and African Canadian communities to lead curricula renewal in support of the provincial reform. As a key part of this process, the team was asked to consider system-wide approaches to support a successful implementation process. Mindful of curricula implementation research, the design team identified a series of recommendations to support capacity-building and meaning-making for the implementation of renewed curricula through cross-regional and provincial professional learning opportunities (Osmond-Johnson & Campbell, 2018; Pietarienen et al., 2017; Soini et al., 2018). For this solution, the curricula design team would work collaboratively with the new PCNT to review, refine, and potentially redevelop the provincial curricula implementation plan within a working environment that embraces inclusive, distributed, and systems leadership approaches (Ainscow, 2020; Azorin et al., 2020; Kamp, 2018; Rincon-Gallardo & Fullan, 2016).

Solution 1: Benefits, Impact, Risks, and Resources

The benefits of Solution 1 are multifold. The solution allows members of the new network team to work collaboratively with each other and the teacher curricula design team. Through engaging in this collective work, there are opportunities for members of the PCNT to share their perspectives on the implementation process and to identify potentially unique supports from their school regions that others could replicate to support the implementation—key capacity-building endeavours for network development (Leithwood & Azah, 2016). It also provides an opportunity for the network team to engage with important social processes through dialogue with the curricula design team regarding individual perspectives and world views, particularly of Indigenous and African Canadian curricula design team and network team members (Reed, 2010; Rivas-Drake, 2019). It is also an opportunity to develop intergroup dynamics through collaborative critical inquiry and problem-solving experiences (Leithwood, 2019; Rincon-Gallardo & Fullan, 2016). As a change facilitator for this work, I would need to support the

development of a learning culture that provided the space and opportunities for all involved to engage in the essential inclusive, distributed, and systems leadership approaches to support the work (Leithwood, 2019; Rincon-Gallardo & Fullan, 2016; Theisens, 2016).

The risks for this solution fall primarily with the challenges that could emerge with a relatively new network team engaging in this process. This team has not yet had the time to understand the working features typically ascribed to networks and how their actions have the potential for innovative problem solving for equity-based and social justice-focused change in the system (Museus et al., 2017; Rincon-Gallardo & Fullan, 2016; Theisens, 2016). Without taking the time to engage in dedicated relationship-building, members may be reluctant to share their knowledge, perspectives, and expertise, including vital Indigenous and African epistemologies for this process, Two-Eyed Seeing and Sankofa (Bartlett et al., 2015; Watson & Wiggan, 2016). As a result, they may not necessarily engage with the critical network learning and leadership practices necessary for this work (Gratton & Erickson, 2007). In addition to this limitation, unlike the curricula design team that has had the opportunity to work on the renewal for a number of months with various staff at the department and other educational partners, the PCNT has had limited access to the work and without a sound understanding of the pedagogical shifts necessary to support the implementation of the curricula, they may be challenged to glean a fulsome understanding how they and their staff could support teachers and school administrators for the curricula implementation process (Pietarienen et al., 2017; Soini et al., 2018).

The resources needed to support this work are substantial. There are significant costs for substitutes for teachers for the curricula design team. There are also costs typically associated with multiple-day meetings. However, there is an allocated budget for this work as per the reform mandate.

Solution 2: Curricula Review Process

Curricula design is typically regarded as an iterative endeavour; the process is often constructed to include multiple review opportunities that allow for updates or substantive change (Soini et al., 2018;

Sullanmaa et al., 2019). While the renewal of curricula included a diverse group of teachers led by

knowledge keepers from Indigenous and African Canadian communities who supported the infusion of

Indigenous and African knowledges and ways of knowing and being into the process, a review would still

be considered an essential part of the process. To support a stronger understanding of the design of the

curricula and to glean important feedback, the teacher curricula design team would engage with the

PCNT and selected CFE staff (pedagogy coaches, Indigenous and African Canadian consultants, and

learning resource specialists) in a review process of the renewed curricula. The review would highlight

pedagogical shifts and the inclusion of key cultural components that are distinct from past curricula

design.

Solution 2: Benefits, Impact, Risks, and Resources

Like Solution 1, there are several benefits to Solution 2. A review process is a necessary part of

the curricula design process, and it is important that external review opportunities exist to allow for a

fresh perspective of the design, and to allow for opportunities to clarify and strengthen aspects of the

curricula (Soini et al., 2018). For this process, this review also affords the opportunity for the teacher

curricula design team to work with the PCNT and selected staff from the regions to engage in in-depth

conversations around the design and purpose of the curricula. Through this work, the new network

team would work closely with Indigenous and African Canadian partners who supported the curricula

design process. This opportunity to explore various worldviews and perspectives, inclusive of Two-Eyed

Seeing and Sankofa principles, would provide enhanced opportunities for relationship-building for the

implementation and overall reform process that must address issues of inequity within the system

(Azorin, 2020; Barlett et al., 2015; Diaz-Gibson et al., 2017; Glaze, 2018; Watson & Wiggan, 2016). Like

the previous solution, my role as a leader at the MPDOE and a change facilitator would be to ensure that

an inclusive learning environment was maintained to ensure voice and agency for previously excluded

communities and team members were provided opportunities to take leadership roles based on their

expertise (Museus et al., 2017).

The risks and resources associated with this solution are similar to Solution 1. This solution

would still require the PCNT to engage and act without the benefit of a thorough understanding of their

role within the process. As well, where this review process involves selected support staff from the

regions, this work will necessitate time away from duties at schools and regional offices and there is the

possibility that not all would be able to engage as various commitments and scheduling could prove

challenging.

Solution 3: Focused Development of the Program Coordinator Network Team

The creation of the PCNT has tremendous promise to support the curricula implementation

process, but only if there is the development of a learning culture for effective collaboration amongst

the group's constituents (Ainscow & Sandhill, 2010; Glaze, 2018; Rincon-Gallardo & Fullan, 2016).

Through engaging in meaningful dialogue to support exploration and valuing of varied perspectives and

world views—particularly of communities that have been historically marginalized in the provincial

education system—and learning to engage in intergroup dynamics for effective collaborative inquiry and

problem-solving, the network team will develop the skill sets to support meaningful education change

(Azorin, 2020; Leithwood, 2019; Meseus et al., 2017). However, developing the necessary attributes for

this level of dedication and engagement takes time and thoughtful facilitation (Diaz-Gibson et al., 2017).

Much of the research on the development of effective networks within educational settings

identify the need for skilled, external facilitation and support through a network leadership approach as

defined through inclusive, distributed, and systems leadership models (Ainscow, 2020; Kamp, 2018;

Rincon-Gallardo & Fullan, 2016; Theisens, 2016). For this network team, an external facilitator with

expertise in cultural-relational teambuilding would need to be brought in to help navigate the difficult

conversations that often occur when engaging in the reflective exercises of social justice-focused

collaborative engagement (Harper & Kezar, 2021; Museus et al., 2017; Rincón-Gallardo & Fullan, 2016).

This process would ensure that the network team would have dedicated support in a 'critical friend' who could ensure that all members engaged in consistent and focused interactions to develop the levels of trust, communication, understandings, and collaborative inquiry and problem-solving skills necessary for critically conscious network engagement and action (Andrews & Leonard, 2018; Rincón-Gallardo & Fullan, 2016; Taylor & Storey, 2017). Woven throughout these interactions would need to be a concerted effort on my part, as a leader and change facilitator at the MPDOE, to ensure the voices of historically marginalized team members and the guiding principles of Two-Eyed Seeing and Sankofa were valued throughout the process, that all members were provided opportunities to lead based on their knowledge and expertise, and that the overarching goal of leading for equity-based system change was maintained throughout the process (Bartlett et al., 2015; Museus et al., 2017; Watson & Wiggan, 2016).

Solution 3: Benefits, Impact, Risks, and Resources

The benefit of this solution is the development of a strong, social justice-focused network team to lead and support the design of a curricula implementation plan and equity-based reform actions. The team, operating on multiple levels within the education system, would be able to work collectively and support one another in the design of a successful curricula implementation plan (Leithwood, 2019). An effective network team would also be able to navigate the varied and complex challenges that would inevitably occur with an implementation process that spans across diverse school regions for curricula that require ongoing professional learning to support shifts in pedagogy, teaching methodology, and new knowledge constructs related to specific cultural connections in the renewed curricula (Rincón-Gallardo & Fullan, 2016).

The risk associated with this solution is a delay in the implementation of the curricula. There are also additional costs associated with contracting an external facilitator to work with the team. The

decision to engage with this process would need to be approved at a senior level. As well, the development of a network team is a challenging and time-consuming process. I would need a commitment from senior leadership, both at the department and the school regions, that I would be able to commit the time to support the development of a successful network team.

Analysis and Chosen Solution

All three proposed solutions provide avenues for building the important relationships, learning, and actions essential for the PCNT to facilitate planning the curricula implementation process. Both Solutions 1 and 2 identify opportunities for the PCNT to liaise, engage in learning about the renewed curricula, and collaboratively problem-solve and plan for the implementation. The first two solutions address many of the key transformational process components, particularly in relation to relationship building and collaborative endeavours related to both the design and implementation planning process for the curricula. Indeed, while Solution 2 is more logistically complex than Solution 1, it provides a valuable scaffold for the planning conversations that comprise much of the first solution; the two solutions work well in concert. However, both solutions falter on the challenges that would be faced by the new PCNT that has yet to have the time to engage in the important processes that are necessary to create effective social justice-focused leaders within an inter-organizational network team (Azorin, 2020; Russel et al., 2015). While Solutions 1 and 2 have an obvious place within the development of a network team tasked with planning curricula implementation as they support a collaborative, systems-based, and inclusive approach to change in a complex system, it is Solution 3, as depicted in Figure 9, that emerges at the essential starting point of this process.

In the selection of Solution 3 as the first action to address this problem of practice, I am reminded of Dr. Glaze's (2018) concluding statement in the *Raise the Bar* report. She challenged provincial education leaders to create working environments where roles and responsibilities would "form a cohesive whole as individuals at all levels of the system work together ... to transform the

system" (Glaze, 2018, p. 42). Solution 3 is the necessary first step in the process for the PCNT to develop the leadership skills and dispositions to successfully engage in the development of a curricula implementation plan.

Figure 9

Aligned and Integrated Solution to the PoP
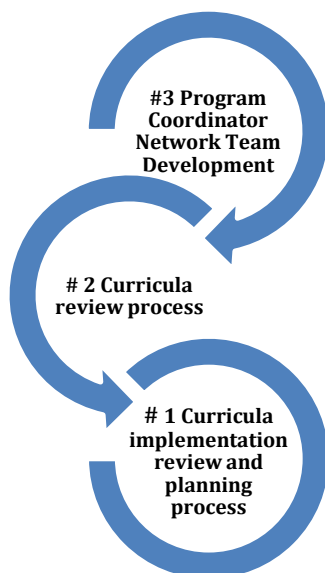
As evident in the description of the factors of the transformation process, the development of the network team emerges within all four components but are more prevalent within informal structures and work processes; they are the components of the model that drive processes for collaborative, inclusive, and system-based change in the province. Supported by the SALT model and Argyris and Schon's learning approaches, network team members will be able to engage in learning experiences that provide opportunities to value varied worldviews and perspectives for leading social justice-based change, with a focus on Indigenous and African Canadian ways of knowing and being, as well as to engage in critical and reflective inquiry processes (Argyris & Schon, 1996; Museus et al., 2017). It is important that every effort is made to ensure that the varied actors that comprise this new working structure have a sound understanding of the leadership philosophies and actions that will drive the

important work of curricula implementation. While the selection of Solution 3 as the starting component for the solution to this problem of practice will incur additional expenses and will necessitate a shift in implementation timelines, the provincial reform process has been designed with the policy guidelines and funding to support this direction (Glaze, 2018; Maritime Province, 2015).

Fullan (2019) advises that going too fast in a change process can mean missing context and failing to help people see their roles and potential in leading and supporting meaningful change. His motto of, "go slow to go fast" (p. 135) feels entirely appropriate in the context of this solution for my PoP. By taking the time to focus on the development of a strong network team for this implementation, I can ensure that the multiple factors identified in the transformation process are thoughtfully woven into a network learning and leadership culture that can support the various components, as detailed in Solutions 1 and 2, necessary for the creation of an inclusive and equity-focused curricula implementation plan. Indeed, the development of a network team focused on leadership for critical consciousness and actions for social justice change holds significant promise for successful inclusive education reform in the province. A full outline of the three aligned solutions can be found in Appendix E.

PSDA Cycle

To support the implementation of the solution, I look to Walter Deming's (1994) Plan, Do, Study, and Act (PDSA) improvement cycle. The PDSA model emerged in the 1950s as an adaptation of Walter Shewhart's Plan, Do, Check, and Act (PDCA) cycle (Johnson, 2016). Deming's (1994) PDSA model has evolved over the decades into a planning process with a demand for a study component that places a greater emphasis on the building of knowledge through the analysis of information. Deming (1994) argued that the use of PDSA for a transformation process must promote "the rugged route of profound knowledge" (p. 4) as everyone within an organization is encouraged to gain a thorough understanding of

the system and their collective role and responsibility for change. It is this focus on the building and

sharing of knowledge that lends the PDSA model so well to my change implementation plan for my PoP.

   While the PDSA cycle provides substantive advantages to support the development of the

chosen solution, there are cautions that must be considered when using this model (Johnson, 2016; C.

Reed & Car, 2016). As researchers have noted, the PDSA model is susceptible to oversimplification and

the method must be employed, particularly when it is being used to support change in complex

organizations, with an understanding of how to utilize other information collection processes to ensure

there is adequate attention to the process of change and growth (C. Reed & Card, 2016). Indeed, the

literature stresses the importance of a wider methodological approach, particularly within the planning

and doing components of multiple iterations and aligned but separate cycles of investigation that must

be conducted for more in-depth problems (Duffy, 2019; C. Reed & Card, 2016). With this in mind, I will

be employing a Modular Kaizen approach (Duffy, 2019) to the process, focusing on timely problem

identification and problem-solving using recommended assessments to support SALT model leadership

and double-loop and deutero learning throughout the PDSA cycles (Argyris & Schon, 1996; Museus et

al., 2017; C. Reed & Card, 2016; Torres-Harding et al., 2012).

   For an organization to develop an inclusive and responsive culture of learning, it must provide

opportunities for self-reflection and higher-level thinking through questioning, problem-solving, and the

generation of new knowledge for effective equity-based leadership and decision-making (Fullan, 2019).

The Modular Kaizen approach promotes a team's use of data and feedback from the planning and doing

components of the process to interrupt the PDSA cycle to support a reflective and meaningful learning

process (Bialek et al., 2011; Duffy, 2019). This model of engagement allows for the network team, with

the support of an external facilitator, to make timely and informed decisions with data derived early in

the process to determine whether to continue with a cycle, alter a cycle, or change the entire model to

ensure a successful learning process focused on equity-based change (Duffy, 2019; Patel, et al., 2022).

Ethical Considerations to Support Change

The reform process that shapes this OIP is derived from a call to action that challenges

education leaders to have the moral courage to address issues of privilege and power and to

thoughtfully create change processes that shift the learning trajectories for a province's historically

marginalized students. This type of moral courage in education leadership, as described by Hargreaves

(2019), is leadership guided by "ethics …to judge what's right and wrong, and to do what is right,

sometimes in circumstances where doing the right thing isn't convenient, expedient… or obvious"

(p.15). Starratt (2014) defines this leadership as one situated within a multi-perspective of three ethics,

the ethics of critique, care, and justice. All three ethical constructs are necessary for leadership defined

by social justice as the compassion of care and the equity of justice are required lenses for the critique

of a world often defined by inequities (Starratt, 2014). In her writing on leadership and transformative

change in education, Carolyn Shields (2014), further argues that leadership that promotes and actively

engages in equitable, inclusive, and social just change for education organizations is the moral heart that

"undergirds the praxis of ethical leadership" (p. 26). This is the work of leaders who are committed to

bringing all members of an education community together to engage in collaborative and inclusive

practices to support meaningful change that results in an education system that values, honours, and

embraces all learners (Hargreaves, 2019; Shields, 2014). As is explored in the following sections, ethical

leadership praxis, supported by inclusive, distributed, and systems leadership approaches, defines this

author's commitment for this change process.

Ethical Leadership and Inclusive Education Reform: Responsibilities of the Organization

An analysis of leadership and reform that is focused on social justice and inclusive practices

must take into account the historical role of education systems as the harbingers of injustice and a wide

range of social inequities (Mowat, 2019; Ryan, 2014). The MPDOE's first attempt to address systemic

racism and inequities in its system with its 2002 *Racial Equity Policy* was met with a degree of skepticism

from historically marginalized communities (Endilee Consultants Inc., 2009; Maritime Province, 2002).

While the goals were ambitious and aimed at system-wide efforts to address racial inequalities, it was

clear that the system had failed to commit to significant shifts in leadership and governing practices to

action change. In an independent report on the policy's implementation, the MPDOE was criticized for

failing to address leadership actions for this purpose which was indicative of a system where a

commitment to eradicate "institutional racism [appeared]to have slipped out of focus" (Endilee

Consultants Inc., 2009, p. 10). With changes to the governing structures in the province having resulted

in a flattened and more horizontal system that provides the opportunity for addressing the issues of

mistrust and cynicism that has plagued the organization, the work to develop principles from which

educational leadership in the system can evolve to meet the challenges of inclusive and antiracist

reform are just emerging (Maritime Province, 2019c).

As a result of the current reform process, the MPDOE has recently created a series of teaching

and administrative standards that are based on a collaborative approach to supporting inclusive

education reform. New teaching and administrative standards in the province were developed around a

guiding principle that asks all educational professionals to "act collectively to name, eliminate, and

prevent systemic inequities and barriers within the classroom, schools, region, and the system"

(Maritime Province, 2019c, p. 1). Educational leadership programs in the province are being redesigned

with a focus on developing leaders who help their colleagues recognize, critically inquire into, empathize

with, and bring together whole groups, inclusive of historically racialized communities, into governing

and administrative processes that strive not to impose a single Western perspective on change

(Maritime Province Leadership Academy, n.d.). The MPDOE is careful not to identify this shift in

leadership and governance as a strictly decolonizing process. There is an understanding that

decolonization is a long-term process and must include a wide range of practices that ask those of who

operate from Eurocentric values and ways of knowing and being to divest these constructs to allow the

space and opportunity for Indigenous and other subjugated and disenfranchised peoples' worldviews to

redefine varied power structures; the MPDOE is early in its journey for this change (Maritime Province,

2018; McKivett et al., 2020). Nevertheless, there is clear recognition through policy and reform action

that injustices that have manifested through inequalities of agency, power, and resources for the

province's Indigenous and African Canadian communities must be addressed so to ensure the colonial

legacy of suppression and subjugation no longer prohibits the education system from effectively

meeting the learning needs of all students. (Dei, 2008; Hamilton-Hinch et al., 2021; Hargreaves, 2019;

McNae, 2014; Trenuto & Gardiner, 2018). This is the important work of change facilitators, like me, who

must endeavour to develop network teams to support the varied components of the reform process,

including the implementation of renewed curricula.

Ethical Leadership and Network Actions

As identified in Chapter 1, while the shift to a horizontal model of governance was a welcomed

recommendation for change within the MPDOE, an understanding of the essential features of successful

network teams was not well established or understood within the system. Indeed, there was no process

to start the development of the networks and many of the leaders from the CFE, who would be key

members of these teams, are working in organizations that tend to embrace more transactional

leadership models. While leaders within the MPDOE have engaged in learning sessions to support an

inclusive and collaborative approach to change, this learning has not been extended to leadership in the

CFE. With this in mind, as a facilitator for the development of the PCNT, I will need to mindful that

resistance on the part of some network team members can stem from an array of concerns including a

lack of trust regarding the MPDOE originating from historic relations between the department and the

CFE, misunderstanding regarding the change process, and concerns about the type of skill sets needed

to successfully engage in an equity-focused collaborative governance scenario (Glaze, 2018; Muema

Musyoka, et al., 2020). In addition, this PCNT is inclusive of members from Indigenous and African

Canadian communities who have historically been excluded from decision-making tables within provincial education (Glaze, 2018). It is essential that Indigenous and African Canadian worldviews and perspectives are understood and valued by the team. As a facilitator for this process, it is my responsibility to engage in the ethical leadership practices that support an open and supportive learning culture.

An understanding of different worldviews and perspectives warrants careful attention of the importance between inclusion and exploitation, particularly of Indigenous and African Canadian knowledge (Dei, 2008; McKivett, et al., 2020). As a leader who embraces inclusive leadership beliefs and practices, this is the responsibility to ensure that various strategies and processes are in place for the establishment of a respectful and safe environment that allows Indigenous and African Canadian worldviews to be valued in a manner that prevents an infusion of these ideas and perspectives into one entity, particularly one that is Western-dominant (Campbell, 2020; Watson & Wiggan, 2016; Wright et al., 2019). The varied differences and strengths of a range of perspectives must be preserved and respected alongside each other to coincide with a cohesive culture for learning. Through encouraging dialogue that provides opportunities for members to engage in self-reflection and acknowledgment of personal privilege and place, productive communication can emerge that allows for the development of critical inquiry and problem-solving skills that are vital for the team as they develop plans for the implementation of renewed curricula (Ainscow, 2020; Rincon-Gallardo & Fullan, 2016).

As members learn more about their roles and responsibilities within the network team, it is important that as a change facilitator, I support the development of culture of learning and sharing that validates each member's individual knowledge, expertise, and skills (Azorin, 2020; Leithwood & Azah, 2016). Through this collaborative and distributed model for leadership, individual members on the team can be empowered to take on various leadership roles based on their abilities and expertise as they engage in the challenging processes of supporting system change (Azorin et al., 2020; Harris, 2016). This

aspect of network team development is particularly important for members from communities that had

previously been excluded from governance tables at the MPDOE. Indigenous and African Canadian

perspectives for supporting equity-based reform is essential and these voices must be valued and heard

for this process (Dei, 2008; Wotherspoon & Milne, 2020). The culture of learning and sharing of the

network team must include a safe and respectful space for Indigenous and African Canadian team

members to take the lead on the development of key components of the implementation plan.

 The development of a critically conscious and reflexive network team that values individual

expertise for collaborative problem solving provides a valuable lens for the team's understanding of the

need to share learning with the various network teams within the MPDOE (MacGregor & Phillips, 2020).

Connections between network governance teams ensures that a common understanding for change

processes are shared to facilitate the impact of ideas and plans for implementing the renewed curricula

(D'Andreta & Scarbrough, 2016; Oborn et al., 2016). Each member of the network team needs to

emerge as a system leader who commits to building relationships with education professionals within

the school regions and throughout the system to ensure that the necessary supports and conditions for

change are in place to support the implementation process (Kamp, 2018). As a change facilitator

supporting the development of the PCNT, this systems-based approach provides a means to strengthen

collaborative efforts and shared responsibility for the implementation process throughout the

organization and the communities that it supports (Mowat, 2019). The development of a systems

leadership approach requires significant commitment from all constituents within this process. It is a

vital component to building the professional capacity and shared responsibility for change within the

system that has faltered on previous attempts to address inequities as a result of fractured governance

structures that failed to communicate and support one another to engage in equity-based reform

(Mowat, 2019).

The courage and the conviction of an ethical leadership praxis, as articulated though inclusive, distributed, and systems leadership approaches, creates the pathway and conditions for collaborative actions of key education partners to focus on whole system change (Ainscow, 2020; Azorin et al., 2020; Mowat, 2019). Through the work of network teams, the inclusive and equity-based reform efforts that have faltered in the past may finally have the much-needed support to succeed.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined the network leadership approach to change that is defined through inclusive, distributed, and systems models. Through the dynamic change framework that combines the congruence model with the SALT leadership model and Argyris and Schon' s (1996) double -loop and deutero learning, the organizational analysis and possible solutions, along with a proposed solution to the PoP, were identified. The final section of the chapter addressed an ethical leadership praxis in alignment with the network leadership approach that highlights the social justice and equity-focused ethos for education reform that must underscore the change process that will be explored in Chapter 3.

Chapter 3: Implementing, Evaluation, and Effective Communication for Social Justice Reform

This chapter will explore a critically aligned framework that addresses a change implementation plan, monitoring and evaluation processes, and a communication model for an inclusive and equity-focused change process. This comprehensive framework provides the required scaffolding to address the PoP that encompasses the development of a network team to support the creation of a curricula implementation plan as part of a provincial inclusive education reform. The multiphase implementation plan depicts the evolution of the PCNT as they transition to a unified group with a dedicated purpose for actioning social justice change through a facilitated intergroup, relational process. The chapter further explores the principled approach to monitoring and evaluating the change process and a KMb-focused communication plan. The chapter concludes with a look at next steps for the curricula implementation process, future considerations for ongoing change in the organization, and a practice narrative epilogue.

Multiphase Change Implementation Plan

Implementing change as part of a large-scale education reform process is a complex endeavour that requires a thoughtful understanding of various organization dynamics (Alemu & Shea, 2019; Weiner, 2009.) Critical to this process are leaders who are committed to building collective capacity and trust among diverse partners to chart pathways that support a system that has indicated its readiness for change and the willingness to engage with the challenging processes of planning and initiating reform (Fullan, 2020). As detailed in Chapters 1 and 2, there is clear recognition that injustices manifested through inequities of power, agency, and resources for the province's Indigenous and African Canadian communities must be addressed to ensure the colonial legacy of suppression and subjugation no longer prohibits the education system from effectively meeting the learning needs of historically marginalized students. For the MPDOE, this change process needs to be anchored in the essential work of supporting the PCNT to develop a learning and leadership culture that embodies the values and ethos of social justice and equity-focused collaborative action for inclusive education reform.

(Buckley & Quaye, 2016; Moliner et al., 2021) As discussed in Chapter 2, the Liberatory Learning for Social Justice Leadership framework comprised of the SALT model and Argyris and Schon's (1996) learning organization integrated with the transformational process of the congruence model provides the support for group-based social learning—crucial for the development of a network team that must work collaboratively to support the development of a curricula implementation plan as part of a larger inclusive education reform process (Mercer Delta Consulting, 2004; Museus et al., 2021; Nadler & Tushman, 1989).

Activating Change Through Critical Intergroup Dialogue

The development of learning processes that embrace intergroup dynamics inclusive of introspective explorations of cultural identities will be critical to the activation of the working and learning culture of an effective network team, particularly one that must traverse a range of sociocultural and organizational scenarios (Liou et al., 2019; Nagda, 2019; Nagda & Gurin, 2007). Literature on the SALT model and similar social justice leadership change frameworks promote the use of Intergroup Dialogue (IGD) as a tool to support the development of socially responsible leadership dedicated to change actions aimed at inclusion, equity, and social justice (Frantell et al., 2019; Harper & Kezar, 2021; Museus et al.,2017; Nagda & Roper, 2019). As noted in Figure 10, the IGD process connects the transformational components of people, culture, organizational structures, and the work of change to the equity-focused leadership actions of the SALT model with the critical problem-solving skills articulated in Argyris and Schon's (1996) double-loop and deutero learning models (Museus et al.,2017; Nagda & Roper, 2019). IGD provides a safe space for sustained and facilitated conversations between people representing various social identity groups with the aim of fostering critical consciousness, intergroup relationships, and capacities for social justice action (Nagda, 2019).

Figure 10

Four-Stage Critical IGD Supported Change Process
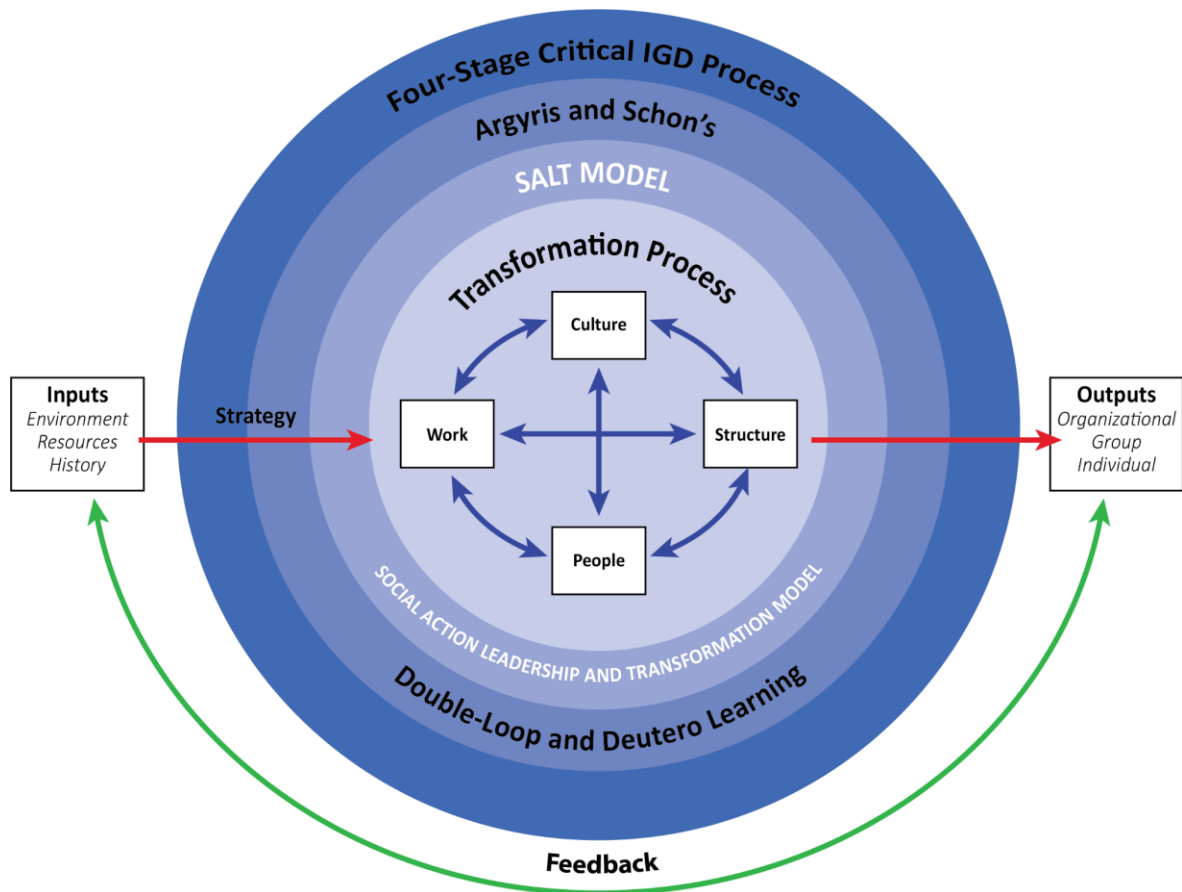
Note. IGD = Intergroup Dialogue; SALT = Social Action, Leadership, and Transformation. Adapted from "Original Frame Bending: Principles for Managing Reorientation," by D. Nadler and M. Tushman, 1989, *The Academy of Management Executive*, *3*(3), p. 195. Copyright 1989 by Academy of Management (https://doi.org/10.5465/AME.1989.4274738).

The four-stage critical IGD process focuses on empowering individuals, with a particular emphasis on those from marginalized communities, through the following four key components: (a) the facilitation of dialogue skills that allow participants to actively listen, speak purposefully, and critically inquire; (b) the fostering of in-depth exploration and understanding of social identities, ways of knowing and being, and social inequities; (c) engagement in discussions about the impact of systemic racism and issues of inequity for the development of critical consciousness; and (d) the building of critical inquiry

and problem-solving skills for collaborative leadership processes to support social justice action (Nagda, 2019; Zuniga et al., 2011). The IGD process is valuable to mandated network team development as it facilitates a gradual shift from individual explorations of issues regarding power, privilege, and marginalization to institutional and societal oppressions with an aim towards supporting actions for social justice change (Zuniga et al., 2011). As depicted in Table 1, the IGD process is central to the development of the PCNT within Phase 1 of the change plan and continues to support the team as they engage in the work of developing an understanding of the curricula and the creation of a provincial implementation plan. A detailed depiction of the change process can be found in the Appendix F, Tables F1–F3.

Table 1

Phased Approach for Network Development and Curricula Implementation Planning

Phases	Goals and priorities	Strategies	Timeline and milestones
Phase 1 Development of the PCNT	Engage in four-stage critical IGD process. Glean an understanding of the network leadership models that will be necessary to support the curricula implementation planning process. Gain a better understanding of the MPDOE's inclusive education implementation goals.	External facilitator will support the team in the four-stage critical IGD. Through a network leadership praxis, supported by the SALT model, the director of curriculum development will support the team through the congruence transformational model to make connections to the varied components of the reform process and the priorities for the curricula implementation plan.	4 to 6 weeks Start immediately and continue the process throughout the three stages.
Phase 2 Curricula Review by the PCNT, Curricula Design Team, and regional staff	Review the renewed curricula with the PCNT and CFE support staff. Utilize IGD and SALT model skills to collaborate for relationship building and knowledge sharing.	With facilitated support, collaboratively review the curricula. Using competencies derived from the IGD process, work with Indigenous and African Canadian partners to glean understandings of the equity and cultural components of the renewed curricula. Engage in inclusive and distributed leadership actions to ensure voice for all participants.	4 to 6 weeks This will commence immediately after Phase 1.

Phases	Goals and priorities	Strategies	Timeline and milestones
Phase 3 Development of the curricula implementation plan by the PCNT and the Curricula Design Team	Develop the curricula implementation plan. Collaborate to share Knowledge with other MPDOE network teams initiate the plan in the system	Using the IGD skills that support the development of critical inquiry and double-loop learning, the PCNT will work with the design team to develop a comprehensive, multiyear implementation plan. This process will entail inclusive, distributed, and systems leadership models to support the process	6 to 8 weeks Implementation process for renewed curricula will take place over a 2- to 3-year period.

Note. CFE = Centres for Education; IGD = intergroup dialogue; MPDOE = Maritime Province Department of Education; PCNT = Program Coordinator Network Team; SALT = social action, leadership, and transformation.

Facilitating the Multiphase Change Process

As noted in Chapters 1 and 2, skilled external facilitation is essential to the development of effective network teams. External facilitators are often described as 'critical friends' who can assess and provide feedback on network development (Buckley & Quaye, 2016; Frantell et al., 2019; Rincon-Gallardo & Fullan, 2016). Facilitators are also vital to support teams as they navigate often contentious and challenging dialogue necessary for interrogating critical functions and priorities (Rincon-Gallardo & Fullan, 2016). The background or training for a network facilitator is often not described beyond an individual who has previously engaged in a successful network formation (Frantell et al., 2019; Rincon-Gallardo & Fullan, 2016). However, as the critical four-stage IGD process is based on social psychological models that require expertise in supporting, monitoring, and evaluating group dialogue that delves into personal beliefs and experiences relating to often contentious social issues, facilitators require specific training (White et al., 2019). This type of training often looks to skill sets for managing heightened emotions and methods to intervene when conflict poses a risk to the group's learning process and well-being (White et al., 2019; Zuniga et al., 2011). As well, facilitators require expertise to support the empowerment of network actors from oppressed and historically marginalized communities within each of the four stages of the process (Nagda, 2019). This highly specialized training can be found in advanced

courses within educational counselling and community-based psychology programs (White et al., 2019; Zuniga et al., 2011). Fortunately, the MPDOE has access to individuals with this specialized education.

Successful four-stage critical IGD processes also often look to cofacilitation, particularly when there are specific, mandated actions or goals for the group (Rodirguez et al., 2011). While one facilitator focuses on the intergroup relational processes that support the development of skill sets dedicated to action planning for change, the other facilitator supports the group's understanding of specific team goals and the organizational scenarios that they will need to consider as they engage in the work (Rodirguez et al., 2011). For the PCNT, this work will need to entail an understanding of the MPDOE's inclusive education reform objectives, the curricula renewal design process, and the network leadership models that will support and action the curricula implementation planning process (Glaze, 2018). As the co-facilitator for the multiphase network development process, I will also need to engage in separate learning activities with the IGD facilitator. This work typically encompasses peer debriefing to ensure that we are able to communicate effectively and provide feedback to one another about the progress of learning for the PCNT (Zuniga et al., 2011). As I will be both a participant and a co-facilitator in this process, this will mean that I will need to take additional consultative sessions with the IGD facilitator for ongoing guidance on my role and responsibilities as a facilitator (White et al., 2019; Zuniga et al., 2011).

Phase 1: Facilitated Development Process for the PCNT

As noted in Chapter 2, the development of the PCNT must support socio-relational learning processes that connect the group to valuing and honouring the varied ways of knowing and being of participants, with a focus on Indigenous and African Canadian beliefs, histories and lived experiences, to emerge as a team with a learning culture capable of tackling the challenging work of collective problem-solving to plan for the curricula implementation (Nagda, 2019; Watson & Wiggan, 2016; Wright et al., 2019). Acknowledging the history of systemic racism within the organization and the issues that have served to derail previous attempts by the MPDOE to implement inclusive education policies and

practices, the four-stage critical IGD is the catalyst to move the Liberatory Learning for Social Justice

Leadership framework into action (Argyris & Schon, 1996; Museus et al., 2017; Nadler & Tushman, 1989;

Nagda, 2019).

An essential component of this phase of the PNCT development will be the first stage of the IGD

process that facilitates the development of foundational dialogue skills such as active listening, asking

probing questions, and taking the time to learn from each other (Frantell et al., 2019). The ability to

engage in open and constructive dialogue prepares the team for the second stage of the process which

entails in-depth exploration of social identities and inequities with a focus on the lived experiences and

ways of knowing and being of Indigenous and African Canadian participants—supporting the

development of critical consciousness (Nagda, 2019). With the successful completion of this stage, the

PCNT can move to the next stage of the process that asks network actors to engage in challenging

discussions regarding the impacts of systemic racism experienced by marginalized communities in the

province. This stage provides opportunities for the team to learn about the intersectionality of identities

and the issues of inequalities that have served to define the learning experiences of historically

marginalized and racialized students in the province (Zuniga et al., 2011). The successful completion of

the first three stages of the IGD process ensures that PCNT members have engaged with key SALT model

leadership components that focus on empathy regarding the experiences of oppressed communities and

a commitment to social justice that ensures diverse voices are central to group efforts (Musesu et al.,

2017; Nagda, 2019). The final stage of the IGD process looks to the development of capacities aligned

with Argyris and Schon's (1996) double-loop and deutero learning to action social justice-based change

(Nagda, 2019). To support this stage of learning, the team will need to glean a better understanding of

the network leadership models and organizational parameters that will define their ongoing work.

As co-facilitator, I will work with the team to make connections to the change process as defined

by the MPDOE's inclusive education reform goals and the SALT model supported network leadership

praxis that encompasses inclusive, distributed, and systems leadership models (Azorin et al., 2020; Campbell, 2020; Liou et al., 2019; Museus et al., 2017). This work will include a necessary focus on the shared responsibilities for leading and supporting change within the team and across the system. The PCNT will need to gain an understanding of the new administrative design for the MPDOE, including the composition of the other network teams and their roles in the curricula implementation process (Glaze, 2018). This process helps solidify the team's understanding of the interplay of the four components of the transformational process—the development of the network working culture, the value of diverse people and perspectives, the work objectives for the reform process, and the new structure of governance for the system (Nadler & Tushman, 1989).

While the heady work of supporting this phase of the PCNT development is part of the new horizontal governance model that now defines the MPDOE, there will still need to be careful consideration of the support and resources required for this effort (Glaze, 2018). There is a dedicated budget for reform work, but approvals will still need to be sought for expenses of network members to work collaboratively and for the fees of an external facilitator for the IGD process. Aside from costs, I will need a commitment from the CFE and the MPDOE that staff that have been assigned to this network team are provided with sufficient support to step away from their other responsibilities in school regions and the department to focus on the work within the PCNT.

Phase 2: Collaborating for Curricula Review

The second phase of the change plan provides an opportunity for the curricula design team to engage with the PCNT and selected CFE program staff to review the renewed curricula. This collaborative review process will be facilitated by the curricula design team, the external facilitator, and myself. This phase of the change plan is not only an opportunity for the PCNT and regional program staff to glean a strong understanding of the design of the renewed curricula and the various resources that

were utilized for its design, but the process highlights how inclusive and distributed leadership models guide and support the implementation planning process (Azorin et al., 2020; Campbell, 2020).

Indigenous and African Canadian MPDOE consultants and community partners lead the design of significant components within the renewed curricula and this review process highlights the importance of inclusive leadership for creating working and learning environments where all voices, particularly historically marginalized, are honoured, empowered, and validated. Indigenous and African Canadian MPDOE consultants and community partners are essential to the planning of the implementation process as their guidance on the design of varied cultural components within the renewed curricula must be incorporated into the professional learning that will support teachers' understanding of the curricula (Glaze, 2018). This joint review process allows the PCNT to harness their IGD and SALT model learning to gain an appreciation for the enhanced roles of Indigenous and African Canadian support staff from the CFE and various community partners for the curricula implementation process (Museus et al., 2017; Nagda, 2019; Nagda & Roper, 2019). This process also provides an avenue to value distributed leadership approaches to the design of the curricula implementation plan (Azorin et al., 2020). The expertise for supporting this work will come from a number of actors with varied expertise within the system.

This phase of the change process emerges as a key step to strengthening the working culture of the network team through the transformational process (Nadler & Tushman, 1989). The opportunity to work collaboratively with a wider group of individuals allows the members of the PCNT to focus on the building and refinement of relational skills to support critical inquiry and collective problem-solving, and to glean a stronger understanding of their role within the organization (Nagda, 2019; Wilkins-Yel et al., 2020). However, like the first phase, this next iteration of the process will require various staff to be released from their responsibilities in the MPDOE and CFE, and there will be costs incurred for meeting requirements. The time frame for this phase could be extended to review individual disciplines to avoid

disruption to the system with the number of teachers on the design team. As well, the start of this

second phase could be delayed if it is determined that the first phase requires more time and support

for the IDG process (White et al., 2019).

Phase 3: Planning for Curricula Implementation

The final phase of this change plan is an opportunity for the PCNT to continue to work

collaboratively with the curricula design team to problem-solve and chart the course for the multi-year

provincial implementation of the renewed curricula. This work will extend the facilitated IGD process

through ongoing conversation and dialogue regarding the development of various professional learning

supports for teachers and school administrators to facilitate the implementation process (Nagda &

Roper, 2019). This is also an opportunity to value the roles of inclusive, distributed, and systems

leadership models to support how the MPDOE and CFE will engage their staffs to support teachers and

schools for the implementation process (Azorin et al., 2020; Campbell, 2020; Kamp, 2018). This phase of

the change process highlights the continued importance of including historically marginalized

community leaders within professional learning models along with providing opportunities for those

with expertise, who would not typically have a leadership role, to guide the development of the plan. As

the two teams collaborate to problem-solve various components of the plan, there will be opportunities

for a system-wide perspective that will allow for enhanced knowledge sharing. Indeed, this process

allows for capacity-building to support the curricula implementation planning throughout various levels

of the organization, including collaboration with other MPDOE network team and senior system staff.

Like the previous phase, support will need to be sought for teachers to step away from their

classrooms to engage with this work. There will be similar expenses related to meeting costs that will

need to be approved. There will also need to be discussions with senior staff at the MPODE and the CFE

to clarify that while this is the final phase of this change plan, this will not be the end of the learning and

ongoing development for the PCNT. The team will still need to be supported as it finds its footing within

the new governance model. This work will coincide with the ongoing support for the curricula

implementation process. Indeed, while this phase of the change plan is scheduled to be completed

within a six to eight-week time span, it is expected that the curricula implementation plan will need to

be revisited and revised throughout the multiyear process, with various collaborative partners; the

transformational process for the team is not concluded with this phase. The external facilitator and I will

need to continue to monitor and evaluate the skills and competencies of the team in relation to the

attributes of a collaborative striving to emerge as a team dedicated to leading and actioning social

justice change (White et al., 2019).

A Principled Approach to Monitoring and Evaluation

According to Patton (2018), a principle-focused approach to monitoring and evaluation

processes is critical to support iterative social justice change initiatives. Often based on norms, beliefs,

and experiences, principles are described by the author as the necessary "rudder for navigating complex

dynamic systems" (Patton, 2018, p.10) that have elected to engage in collaborative and equity-based

change. Embracing a principle-focused approach, the Collaborating for Equity and Justice (CEJ) model

was designed to provide a valuable scaffold for monitoring and evaluation methods selected to support

collaborative social justice-focused change endeavours that place a particular emphasis on providing

voice and agency for historically marginalized communities (Wolfe et al., 2020b). CEJ principles address

six core tenets to support monitoring and evaluation models through: (a) ensuring a dedicated focus on

issues of injustice and systemic racism; (b) supporting a collaborative approach where all participants

have a voice to determine change; (c) utilizing a range of strategies to support inclusive and distributed

forms of leadership within a collaborative and the broader organization; (d) focusing on policies and

systems-based structural changes; (e) incorporating scholarship that acknowledges the complexity of

social justice change and evaluation models; and (f) engaging appropriate methods to support

collaborative functions that facilitate the development of members' abilities to lead equity-based

change (Wolfe et al., 2020b). CEJ principles ensure that facilitators and leaders who support the development of collaborative network teams do not lose sight of social justice goals while using various measurement protocols or focusing on specific collaborative outcomes (Wolfe et al., 2020a).

The incorporation of racial equity and social justice principles for monitoring and evaluative purposes is essential to support the development of a network team dedicated to an inclusive process to lead and support the implementation of renewed curricula for the MPDOE's education reform process (Patton, 2018; Wolfe et al., 2020b). The selection of the CEJ model also aligns with the developmental evaluation framework that was chosen by an external research team engaged by the MPDOE to conduct province-wide research on the ongoing implementation of the provincial inclusive education reform process (Whitley & Hollweck, 2020; Wolfe et al., 2020b). For an implementation process within a complex social organization undergoing reform, this method allows for pauses in the process to consider ever-changing scenarios and local innovations that can provide invaluable insight into a change process (Patton, 2016; 2018). The information gleaned from the monitoring and evaluation of the change process noted in this OIP will become part of this larger reform implementation research.

Monitoring and Evaluation Methods

To support the PCNT as they engage in the community-inclusive social learning processes as per the IGD methods, the Social Justice Scale (SJS) evaluation tool will be used by the external network facilitator to ascertain the progress of a network learning culture that is dedicated to leading social justice change (Nagda, 2019; Torres-Harding et al., 2012; Wilkins-Yel et al., 2020). SJS is a psychometric instrument that was developed to determine and measure attitudes and perceptions of collaborative actors regarding social justice values, perceived self-efficacy towards social justice efforts, and intentions to engage in social justice-related actions (Fietzer & Ponterotto, 2015; Torres-Harding et al., 2012). Based on the social cognitive model of Ajzen (1991) that posits a strong correlation between

attitudes and behaviours, the SJS consists of a 44-item scale that is broken into four subsections that focus on attitudes towards social justice, beliefs regarding behavioural abilities to work collaboratively, perceived attitudes of others in relation to social justice actions, and behavioural intentions regarding dialogue that directly addresses social inequalities and systemic racism (Torres-Harding et al., 2012). Scored on a Likert-type scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree), the SJS evaluation tool has been shown in a series of studies to offer "practitioners a promising tool to predict engagement in social justice behaviour" (Fietzer & Ponterotto, 2015, p. 31). The value of the SJS to the development of the PCNT is multifold. The SJS evaluation tool can provide valuable information on the development of intergroup culture dedicated to inclusive and equity-focused education reform and the growth of social justice leadership skills and attributes as defined by the SALT model (Flood, 2019; Museus et al., 2017; Torres-Harding et al., 2012).

A collaborative network team that embraces social justice beliefs and the collective will to engage in equity-focused action must also have the capacity for continuous learning and change (Buckley & Quaye, 2016: Nagda, 2019). Operationalizing problem-solving skills and knowledge building during a change scenario are vital for the PCNT to successfully engage with the learning processes of the change plan. To support an understanding of these learning attributes, the Dimensions of a Learning Organization Questionnaire (DLOQ) provides a means for a network facilitator and individual network team members to measure learning growth within a collaborative through an examination of its learning culture and climate (Marsick, 2013; Sidani & Reese, 2018). As described by Kim and Callahan (2013), this psychometric instrument provides insight into how a learning culture within a group can emerge as the "critical element for learning transfer" (p.184) that supports innovation for ongoing change. The seven dimensions of learning that are measured through the questionnaire include: (a) continuous learning; (b) ability to critically inquire; (c) team learning; (d) systems-based thinking; (e) empowerment for change; (f) connections to the system; and (g) leading systems change (Marsick, 2013). Information

gleaned from this assessment provides insight into individual and team-based critical thinking and

problem-solving skills that are developed through double-loop and deutero thinking processes and

connections to systems-level change and leadership—all critical components for a network team striving

to develop as a cohesive, social justice-focused collaborative with a goal of supporting the

implementation of renewed curricula for inclusive education reform (Argyris & Schon, 1996; Jaaron &

Barkhouse, 2017).

      With the guiding focus of CEJ, aligned with the developmental evaluation model that defines the

provincial research process, the combined SJS and DLOQ psychometric assessments, as noted in Figure

11, provide a model of monitoring and evaluation that will allow the PCNT and supporting external

facilitator to gauge the development of a collaborative and social justice-focused learning culture to

successfully move the change process detailed within this OIP (Marsick, 2013; Torres-Harding et al.,

2012; Wolfe et al., 2020b). A principle-focused approach to the evaluation of learning growth for the

PCNT is particularly useful with the selected PDSA and Modular Kaizen approaches to plan, action, and

reflect upon the varied change processes (Duffy, 2019; Patton, 2016; C. Reed & Card, 2016).

Figure 11

Social Justice Monitoring and Evaluation Model
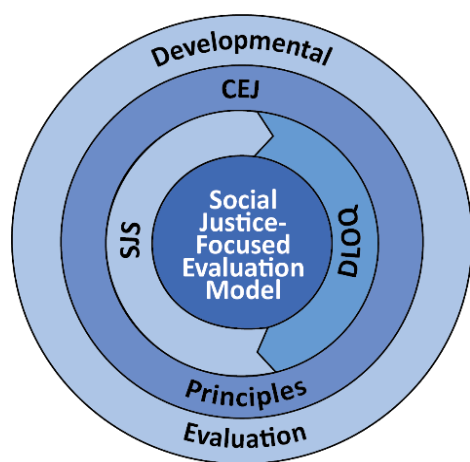
Note. CEJ = Collaborating for Equity and Justice; DLDQ = Dimensions of a Learning Organization
Questionnaire; SJS = Social Justice Scale.

Monitoring and Evaluating the Implementation Plan

As depicted in Figure 12, the development of a social justice-focused network governance team to support the implementation of renewed curricula as a component of a larger, provincial reform process will require a series of sequential, interdependent PDSA phased cycles, supported by a Modular Kaizen approach, to determine a pathway for success (Duffy, 2019; C. Reed & Card, 2016).

Figure 12

PDSA and Modular Kaizen Sequenced Model
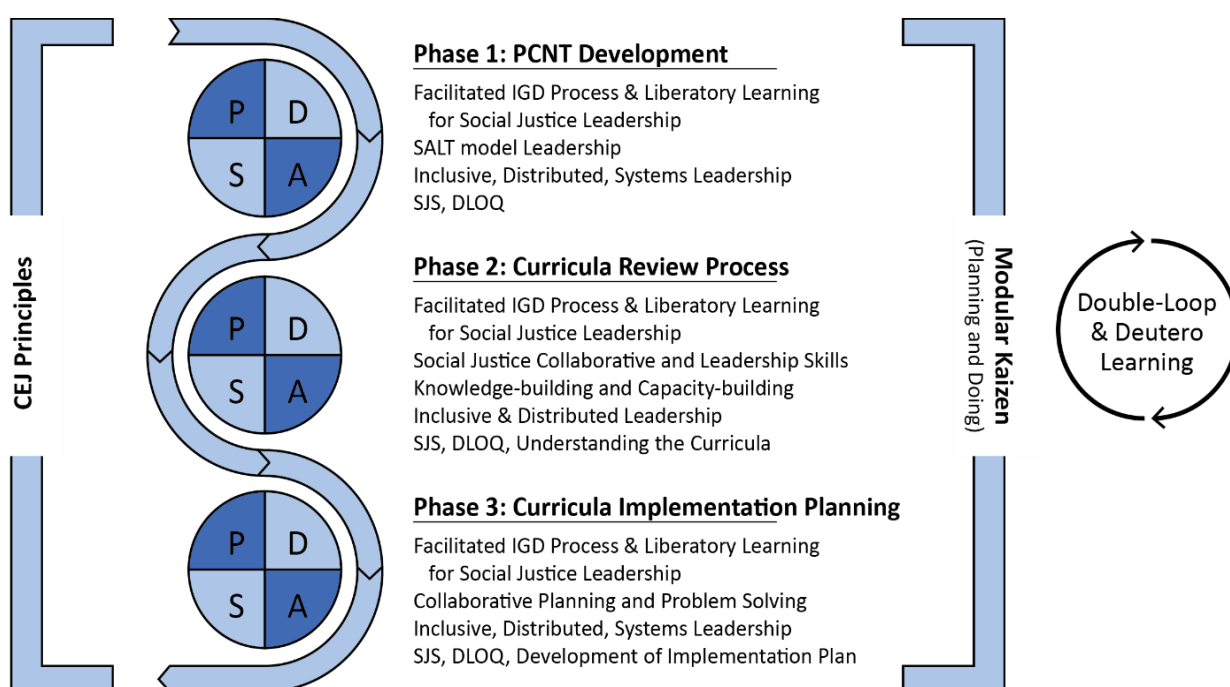
Note. CEJ = collaborating for equity and justice; DLDQ = Dimensions of a Learning Organization Questionnaire; IGD = intergroup dialogue; PCNT = program coordinator network team; PDSA = plan, do, study, act; SALT = social action, leadership, and transformation; SJS = Social Justice Scale.

Critical to this process is an appreciation of the driving forces for the provincial reform actions and the change goals as described in Chapter 1 of this OIP, specifically, the necessity of collaborative and equity-focused leadership and governance teams to support inclusive education reform (Glaze, 2018). This work will be actioned through a series of transformational factors supported by a network

leadership praxis as defined by inclusive, distributed, and systems-based leadership approaches that will

serve to empower and engage MDPOE and CFE leaders and community partners across various levels of

the system to support the development of the implementation plan for inclusive and culturally

responsive curricula (Azorin et al., 2020; Campbell, 2020; Liou et al., 2019).

Phase 1 : Program Coordinator Network Team Development

The primary goal of this first phase of the implementation plan is to support the development of

a PCNT that embraces the beliefs and actions of a collaborative dedicated to social justice leadership

and action in support of inclusive education reform (Glaze, 2018; Museus et al., 2017). Looking at this

initial phase of the implementation process through the lens of the PDSA model highlights the necessity

of skilled facilitation to support the development of the four components of the IGD process (Frantell et

al., 2019; Radziwill, 2016; C. Reed & Card, 2016; Rincón-Gallardo & Fullan, 2016). One of the most

common failings associated with the PDSA model is the poor execution of the planning phase (C. Reed &

Card, 2016). In many instances, this failing is largely attributed to a team struggling to understand its

own internal dynamic—the attitudes, values, and behaviours that constitute the make-up of its cultural

work style (C. Reed & Card, 2016). Without this vital knowledge, the team will be challenged to engage

in the deep thinking required to determine the other critical components of the planning phase that

must consider varied factors including a clear understanding of the challenges to be addressed, the

criteria for success, and the mechanisms the team will need to engage in to maneuver and alter aspects

of the multiple PDSA phases (C. Reed & Card, 2016). With the use of SJS and DLOQ measures, the

facilitator and the team can glean preliminary information on the varied dynamics of a team and review

or alter learning scenarios that comprise the four-stage critical IGD process that supports the network

team's ability to effectively collaborate and plan to enact meaningful change. These are key attributes

for a group using the Modular Kaizen approach, which supports timely analysis of data to pause the

PDSA process during the planning and doing phases to ensure that learning is progressing in a

meaningful way to support their work (Duffy, 2019; Marsick, 2013; Nagda, 2019; Torres-Harding et al., 2012).

Through the process of learning about the four-stage IGD process, members of the team will also explore SALT model leadership constructs that will shape the planning and decision-making of the entire implementation process (Museus et al., 2017). The work of curricula implementation will require inclusive, distributed, and systems leadership approaches to support the coordination of diverse teams working collectively to facilitate the varied equity-focused aspects of the reform process (Azorin et al., 2020; Campbell, 2020; Liou et al., 2019). For this to be successful, the PCNT will need to have a fulsome understanding of specific elements of the SALT model leadership that place a particular emphasis on voice and empowerment of historically marginalized communities to cultivate a learning culture that is more equitable and inclusive (Museus et al., 2017).

With planning processes in place, the team can meaningfully engage in the detailed work of *Do* component of the PDSA cycle for this phase. With the support of an external facilitator, the team can engage with the four stages of the IGD process (Nagda, 2019; Wilkins-Yel et al., 2020). To gauge the team's progress within this social learning process, the external facilitator will use the SJS and DLOQ measures (Marsick, 2013; Torres-Harding et al., 2012). At this stage, using the Modular Kaizen approach, the team and the facilitator can determine whether this component of the cycle needs to be repeated, altered, or if the targets have been sufficiently met to fully implement and sustain the work to move to the next phase of the process (Duffy, 2019). The data from these evaluation tools are also an essential part of the *Study* phase of the cycle. Here, the development of the team and their efforts to glean a better understanding of their role in the process can be fully determined. This data will shape decisions regarding the *Action* component of the cycle—whether the team has made sufficient progress in their learning or if they need to revisit the entire cycle and set new targets for the work (Reed & Card, 2016).

The team will continue to have the opportunity to grow and develop as they work through the next two phases of the implementation process. (Duffy, 2019; Jaaron & Barkhouse, 2017; Yauch & Steudel, 2016).

Phase 2: Curricula Review Process

The decision to move to this second phase of the implementation plan is predicated upon the successful completion of the PDSA cycle in Phase 1. The curricula review process, with the curricula design team working with the PCNT and select regional staff, is the next step in the knowledge-building of the design and purpose of the renewed curricula. During this second PDSA cycle, the PCNT would continue to build on their social justice-focused collaborative and leadership skills as they engage in the conversations around the philosophical and pedagogical underpinning of the renewed curricula (Museus et al., 2017; Nagda, 2019). This process would allow for both the PCNT and the CFE staff to gain a more fulsome understanding of the curricula design and supports that would need to be developed to ensure that it could be successfully implemented.

The *Plan* component of this second PDSA cycle will continue to review the learning and working culture of the PCNT (Johnson, 2016). This is also an opportunity to determine the beliefs and expectations for the curricula design team and the regional support staff. With this information, the external facilitator and I can engage the groups with a review of the goals for this cycle and develop a series of planning documents to ensure there is clear communication of the criteria for success and the selection of measures to collect data on the process.

Engaging with the Modular Kaizen approach, the PCNT will critically inquire and problem-solve the varied aspects of the Plan and Do components of this PDSA cycle using data derived from these cycle components (Duffy, 2019). Working with the curricula design team, the PCNT and their staff will gain a better understanding of how the curricula supports an inclusive and culturally responsive approach to learning. The success of the *Do* component of the cycle will be evaluated using the SJS and DLOQ assessments along with a review of the goals for this phase which encompass a thorough understanding

of the new curricula (Marsick, 2013; Torres-Harding et al., 2012). An analysis of these assessments, with

the support of the facilitator and myself during the *Study* phase of the cycle, should be able to provide

the team with the information as to whether to reframe the work of the cycle and try again or to sustain

the work and move forward with the *Action* phase (Marsick, 2013). It will be important to carefully

critique the results as failure to meaningfully engage in the double-loop and deutero learning and the

knowledge-building process of the curricula review will require a revisit of the cycle as the next phase of

the implementation process requires the PCNT to have the knowledge and leadership capacities to

move the planning for curricula implementation process forward (Argyris & Schon, 1996; Jaaron &

Barkhouse, 2017). A need to repeat this cycle will require careful consideration as the cost is

considerable with CFE requiring support for substitute costs with their staff occupied with this work. The

use of the Modular Kaizen approach to adjust the cycle early in the process will hopefully provide the

necessary support to avoid a full repeat of the cycle.

Phase 3: Curricula Implementation Planning

The third phase of the implementation process requires the previous two phases to have

successfully met their objectives. The PCNT will need to have developed a culture of social justice-

focused collaboration for actioning change and sound knowledge of the renewed curricula to effectively

engage with the curricula design team to plan the provincial curricula implementation process. As in

previous phases, the team must take the time to review the objectives for this next iteration of the

process. For this phase, goals that will determine the *Plan* component of the cycle, focusing primarily

upon the development of a curricula implementation plan with enhanced roles for lead teachers, school

administrators, and regional staff, and of key partners from Indigenous and African Canadian

communities supported through inclusive, distributed, and systems leadership models, will need to be

thoroughly discussed and understood (Azorin et al., 20202; Campbell, 2020; Liou et al., 2019). Through

engaging in this dialogue, the PCNT can share their perspectives on the implementation process and potential pathways for success.

The *Do* phase of the cycle will comprise the development of a multiyear provincial curricula implementation plan that will include support for school and cross-regional professional learning communities and professional learning opportunities at various levels in the system. During this phase, the PCNT will need to determine how data will be collected on the curricula implementation process at the school and regional level to support the larger provincial research project focusing on the implementation of the inclusive education reform process (Glaze, 2018; Whitley & Hollweck, 2020; Patton, 2018). In alignment with the larger research process for the province, data from the implementation will need to focus on shifts in pedagogy and teaching methodologies, access to professional learning, ongoing supports for schools and school administrators, and the impact of the renewed curricula on student learning, with a particular focus on Indigenous and African Canadian students. (Whitley & Hollweck, 2020).

While the *Plan* and *Do* phases of the PDSA cycle, like the previous cycles, rely on the collaborative efforts and decisions of the network team that can continue to be monitored and evaluated through the SJS and DLOQ measures, the *Do* component of this cycle will also include feedback from other actors in the organization as this final cycle will entail the approval and activation of the provincial curricula implementation plan (Duffy, 2019; Marsick, 2013; Torres-Harding et al., 2012). With this, the PCNT will need to utilize the Modular Kaizen approach to potentially alter this component of the cycle as a result of additional input from other MPDOE network teams and senior MPDOE and CFE staff, who will also be supporting this process (Duffy, 2019). Once the curricula implementation plan is reviewed, approved, and initiated, the *Study* component of this cycle will generate the data to support decision-making for the varied *Act* stages of a multiyear curricula implementation process. This information will be critical as there is a high likelihood of varying levels of commitment for this

implementation within the system (Maritime Province, 2015; Glaze, 2018). As this is an iterative process, there could be multiple versions of this cycle developed and actioned to support the implementation process (Duffy, 2019; Patton, 2016). The successful completion of this implementation will see the achievement of a key goal for provincial reform.

The development of a social justice-focused network team dedicated to enacting the work of education reform defines the iterative, phased approach to the monitoring and evaluation model detailed in the previous sections. Through a series of sequential and interdependent implementation phases buttressed by a social justice-focused monitoring and evaluation framework, the PCNT will have the time and the support to develop the leadership attributes and skills to successfully navigate the varied factors of the PoP that defines this process. The value of the PSDA model and the Modular Kaizen approach are their abilities to support the iterative, knowledge-building, knowledge-sharing, and problem-solving processes necessary for aligning the transformational factors critical to the development of a network team dedicated to supporting social justice change through a provincial curricula implementation planning process (Duffy, 2019; Johnson, 2016; C. Reed & Card, 2016).

KMb and Communication for Curricula Implementation

The creation of mandated network teams in the MPDOE evolved from the recognition that the knowledge and expertise needed to support inclusive education reform required the collective efforts of multiple partners from varied levels and spheres within the organization. This model of coordinated and collaborative engagement in aid of operationalizing varied knowledge bases and research endeavours into change actions defines the MPDOE's commitment to knowledge sharing and KMb for its education reform process (Briscoe et al., 2016; Glaze, 2018; Moliner et al., 2021). While KMb has a range of definitions, for organizations like the MPDOE with mandated network teams to support change, the importance and value of this model extends beyond abilities to generate and share innovations (Briscoe et al., 2016; Moliner et al., 2021). Networks created for the purpose of supporting research and

knowledge creation for social justice endeavours have the means to emerge as crucibles for relational

connectedness (Frick & Frick, 2010; Moliner et al., 2021) As Briscoe et al., (2016) note in their study on

the development and functioning of networks in education for the purpose of KMb, it is the

development of sociorelational processes within networks that "have the potential to create ongoing

social contract" (p.20) to promote a dynamic and collaborative culture of knowledge creation and

knowledge transfer for meaningful reform processes. However, the ability of networks to support the

actioning of knowledge transfer in large and complex organizations can be fraught with challenges

(Briscoe et al., 2016; D'Andreta & Scarbrough, 2016; Oborn et al., 2016).

Communications Challenges for Networked Organizations

One of the well-documented limitations of network teams attempting to activate meaningful

change processes in organizations is institutionalized communication boundaries that prohibit the

exchange of information (Brummel et al., 2012; D'Andreta & Scarbrough, 2016). These boundaries often

occur because of failures to value interpersonal and intergroup relationships within and amongst

network teams that can manifest in poor communication of key innovations throughout the

organization (Briscoe et al, 2016; D'Andreta & Scarbrough, 2016). The MPDOE, like many large social-

based organizations, has long suffered from poor internal communication models (Beatty, 2015; Glaze,

2018; Linke & Zerfass, 2011). As noted in Chapter 1, communication issues figure prominently in many

of the critiques and reform papers composed over the years regarding the organization. While the shift

to a network model of governance was to mitigate some communication issues within the organization,

this model of governance still poses its own unique communication challenges (D'Andreta & Scarbrough,

2016; Glaze, 2018; Maritime Province, 2015). To mitigate these scenarios, the communication plan for

this OIP will focus on a multi-pronged and multilevel approach that will encompass effective KMb for the

curriculum implementation planning process through support of key network communication models

identified as 'knowledge brokerage' and 'knowledge closure' (D'Andreta & Scarbrough, 2016; Oborn et

al., 2016). Knowledge brokerage supports intergroup relationships within networks while knowledge closure looks to communication approaches with other network teams and members of the broader organization (D'Andreta & Scarbrough, 2016; Oborn et al., 2016).

As noted in Figure 13, the IGD process that facilitated the development of the PCNT, particularly within Phase 1 of the change plan, supports brokerage communication for the team (Museus et al., 2017; Nagda, 2019). This dialogue-based approach to communication will be extended for knowledge closure through the Alignment, Voice, Identification, and Dialogue (AVID) internal communication model to ensure that PCNT innovations and plans for supporting curricula implementation are shared in a dialectic manner with other network teams and MPDOE staff during Phases 2 and 3 of the change plan (Ruck, 2020). Communication to the CFE, community partners, and the public regarding implementation plans for the renewed curricula will be incorporated into the MPDOE's ongoing reform communications that are crafted through a recently redesigned provincial external communication model that focuses on a responsive and participatory approach to communicating change actions (Glaze, 2018).

Figure 13

Dialogic Communication Strategy: Brokerage Communication
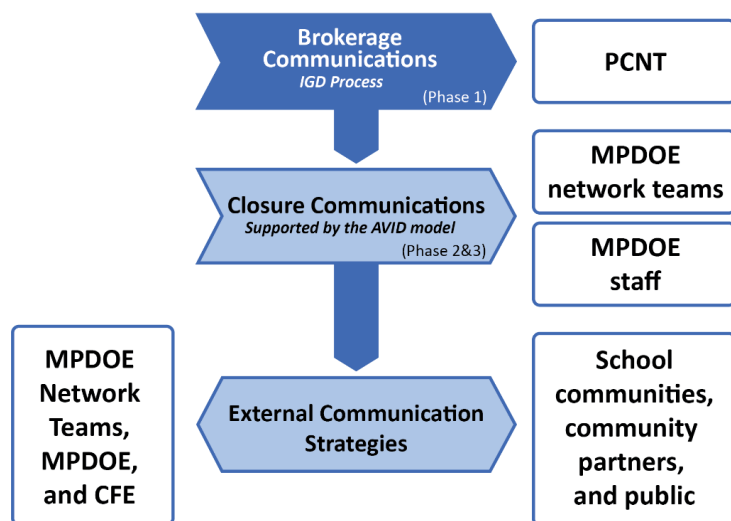
Note. AVID = alignment, voice, identification, and dialogue; CFE = Centres for Education; IGD = intergroup dialogue; MPDOE = Maritime Province Department of Education; PCNT = program network coordinator team.

Internal Communication to Support KMb: Knowledge Brokerage

Effective network teams are often comprised of individuals who are both expert knowledge keepers and knowledge generators (Azorin, 2020; Diaz-Gibson et al., 2017). However, the translation of these essential attributes into effective 'knowledge brokerage' within a network team requires a dedicated process to develop communication skills that transcend any barriers that may exist between network actors (C. R. Anderson & McLachlan, 2016). The facilitated IGD process provides the necessary scaffolding to develop the cooperation, trust, and reciprocity that allows the flow of ideas to evolve into new knowledge and innovations within a diverse network team (Frantell et al., 2019; Nagda, 2019). With these strong communication skills, network actors are not only able to work collaboratively to problem-solve for the successful design of a curricula implementation plan within the PCNT, but they are able to further hone the SALT model supported inclusive, distributed, and systems leadership approaches that are critical to expanding the knowledge and capacities of various members of the system to support change beyond the limited sphere of a singular network team (Ainscow, 2020; Azorin et al., 2020; Kamp, 2018; Museus et al., 2017; Ryan, 2014). Indeed, these leadership models provide a mode to translate the ideas and innovations of the PCNT through knowledge sharing that empowers various actors within the organization to action the curricula implementation plans into successful implementation scenarios within the schools of the province (Azorin et al., 2020; Diaz-Gibson et al., 2017; Kamp, 2018). However, the important work of connecting and communicating with other network teams and a range of individuals who occupy various spaces within the organization during Phases 2 and 3 of this change plan can easily be circumvented by a lack of dialogue-based communication opportunities that can obstruct the flow of information and knowledge sharing (D'Andreta & Scarbrough, 2016). Potential information gaps that could hinder the transfer of knowledge amongst network teams and the broader organization can be addressed through the development of responsive and reciprocal communication channels that

support and amplify the leadership and dialogical approaches of the PCNT (Linke & Zerfass, 2011; Ruck, 2020).

Internal Communication to Support KMb: Knowledge Closure

For the curricula implementation plans of the PCNT to be successfully communicated and actioned within the provincial education system, network closure will need to be supported (D'Andreta & Scarbrough, 2016; Oborn et al., 2016). Aligned with a systems leadership approach, network closure expands the locus of innovation from a singular network to other network teams and varied actors within an organization (Kamp, 2018; Meng et al., 2016). While discourse and conversation can support this important connecting of varied peoples and groups to the creation and embedding of knowledge, network closure within a large organization requires a dedicated internal communication strategy to ensure that meaningful dialogue is able to occur with all actors who are engaged with supporting this inclusive change process (Briscoe et al., 2016; Linke & Zerfass, 2011).

While much of the literature on communication for change within large organizations tends to view the process as mostly a linear model that guides the transmission of information, a growing body of critically aligned research is focusing on the importance of responsive and inclusive forms of internal communication that provides voice and agency for more meaningful exchanges of ideas and innovations to influence and support change scenarios (Beatty, 2015; Ruck, 2020). The AVID framework (see Figure 14) evolved from a series of studies developed to ascertain organizational actors' interest in knowing more about and participating in the development of change plans and actions (Ruck, 2020). The research provided clear evidence that power-sharing through engaging in dialogue for idea creation and decision-making fostered the development of a learning culture supportive of actioning change (Ruck, 2020). The AVID communication framework focuses on the following four dimensions that provide opportunities for knowledge sharing within a communication change model through: (a) addressing the importance of alignment and connecting the work of varied teams and partners to the change processes

in an organization; (b) creating spaces and opportunities for organization actors to voice ideas about

goals and initiatives for change; (c) delving into the beliefs and underlying values that shape the identity

of an organization and its change goals and actions; and (d) creating a dialogical approach that allows for

knowledge sharing and idea generation (Ruck, 2020).

Figure 14

AVID Communication Model

Note. Adapted from The AVID Framework for Good and Ethical Practice in *Exploring Internal Communication: Towards Informed Employee Voice* (4th ed.), by K. Ruck, 2020, p. 78. Copyright 2020 by Routledge (https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429244698).

Ruck (2020) notes that it is the dialogical process that largely underpins the entirety of the

framework. Through the creation of a range of opportunities for members of an organization to engage

in learning and sharing, the AVID communication process can move research, ideas, and innovations

forward for organizational change—supporting successful KMb for the system

(Ruck, 2020).

AVID Framework for Communication Amongst Network Teams

For a networked approach to KMb that defines the reform process in the MPDOE, it is essential

that the PCNT engage in inclusive, distributed, and systems leadership practices to share their

knowledge, innovations, and decision-making processes with other network teams (Azorin et al., 2020;

Diaz-Gibson et al., 2017; Glaze, 2018; Kamp, 2018; Ryan, 2014). The AVID framework extends the

dialogical approach of the IGD process (see Figure 15) to ensure alignment of the various network

endeavours is achieved through opportunities for network members to review, discuss, and provide

feedback on their collective work (Nagda, 2019; Ruck, 2020). To support this process, research on

effective network connectivity within public social organizations identifies the importance of developing

close working relationships amongst network teams (Briscoe et al., 2016; D'Andreta & Scarbrough,

2016). This relational work environment is often facilitated by ensuring that teams working in person are

doing so in close proximity and meeting times are aligned as often as possible so that groups are able to

meet periodically to review each other's goals and progress on work for the organization (D'Andreta &

Scarbrough, 2016). This also provides opportunities for team members to act as critical friends to review

and provide feedback on the work (D'Andreta & Scarbrough, 2016; Storey et al., 2017; Taylor & Storey,

2017). Through this level of dialogue, the teams can ensure alignment of their work for the purpose of

supporting the reform process. Beyond the exploration and interrogation of the varied initiatives of the

network teams, the AVID process also provides the opportunity to consider the values and beliefs that

define the network teams' initiatives and the manner in which the work is progressing (Ruck, 2020). This

is a critical factor as the work of the teams needs to embody the inclusive and social justice-focused

change process that defines the provincial education reform process (Glaze, 2018).

The dialogical component of the AVID framework stresses the importance of providing a variety

of avenues to support conversations regarding change processes in an organization (Ruck, 2020). To

complement the face-to-face dialogue that undergirds much of the knowledge sharing that must occur

amongst the MPDOE network works, the use of the interactive MPDOE intranet system will provide an

additional communication avenue for the network teams (Han et al, 2015; Ruppel & Harrington, 2001).

The value of an intranet system is that it allows for sharing of information on the progress of various

initiatives and the meeting of milestones in an internal system that facilitates information exchange

during the development process (Han et al, 2015; Ruppel & Harrington, 2001). Here, members of

network teams can also pose questions to the PCNT regarding various aspects of the implementation

plan and problem-solve collaboratively in a virtual environment. Using various online meeting software

and online collaboration tools, the teams can also meet and share virtually, extending the value of the

dialogue opportunities (Han et al, 2015).

Figure 15

Dialogic Communication Strategy: Knowledge Closure
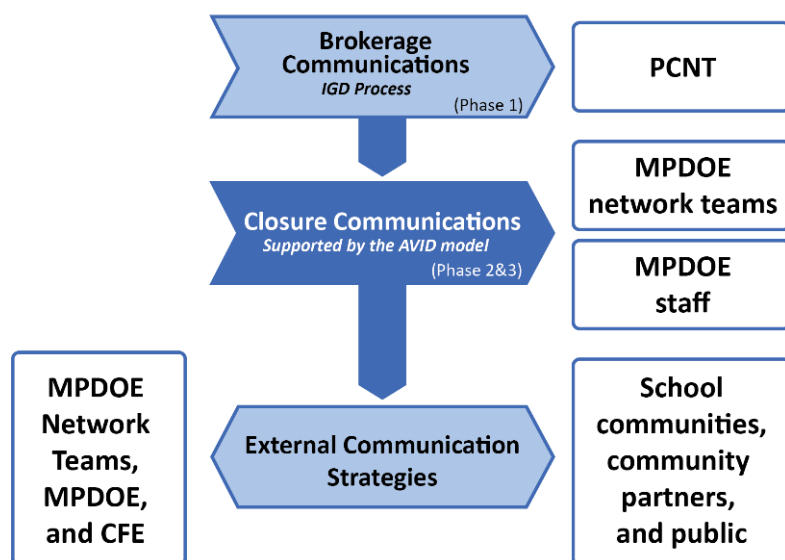
Note. AVID = alignment, voice, identification, and dialogue; CFE = Centres for Education; IGD = intergroup dialogue; MPDOE = Maritime Province Department of Education; PCNT = program network coordinator team.

AVID Framework for Communication with MPDOE Staff

While the external communication plan for the implementation of the provincial inclusive

education policy was developed and actioned by a dedicated communication team at the MPDOE,

internal communication for the staff at the department is reliant upon directors of divisions and

executive directors of branches. As with many larger organizations supporting change processes,

internal communications have not been addressed as a specific strategy, nor have there been

discussions about a unified process for engaging staff during the process (Linke & Zerfass, 2011).

However, initial communication sessions regarding the inclusive education reform process with the

MPDOE staff have been designed to allow for interactive discussions and opportunities for input. Since the process started, there have been large town hall-style meetings that have provided the entire staff opportunities to ask questions and provide feedback on varied aspects of the reform process. The AVID approach supports this model and provides a communication approach that ensures that the staff in the curriculum development division can make clear connections between their work and the initiatives of the PCNT (Ruck, 20202). The model also provides opportunities to review, critique, and provide feedback on the developing curricula implementation plan, enhancing and building upon the KMb process (Ruck, 2020).

Similar to the meeting format with the network teams, meetings will be scheduled regularly, either in person or virtually, to provide opportunities for the curriculum development division to meaningfully engage with the plans that are being developed by the PCNT. This is an excellent opportunity to review the detailed work plans for the curriculum division to ensure alignment with the implementation work from the PCNT. Similar to the queries that emerged from the town hall full staff meetings, it is anticipated that there will be questions about how to connect individual work responsibilities to the curricula implementation plan. Some of the other questions may be related to the development of professional learning to support understandings of key learning concepts, methodologies, and resources that the curriculum development staff helped the teacher curricula design team develop for the renewed curricula. The curriculum development staff will want to ensure that these items are properly addressed in the implementation plan. Supporting the process through distributed and systems leadership approaches, I can ensure that these queries are brought to the PCNT (Azorin et al., 2020; Kamp, 2018). As the planning process progresses, timeline and milestone updates can be shared at these meetings.

The intranet information site will allow curriculum development staff at the MPDOE to interact, provide feedback, and keep apprised of the varied aspects of the planning work of the PCNT. Interactive

messaging boards and other online interactive tools provide a means for queries and ideas for the

process to be viewed and considered by all involved (Ewing et al., 2019; Mazzei, 2010). This provides an

opportunity for direct communication between the curriculum development staff at the MPDOE and the

PCNT. Highlighting the importance of distributed and systems leadership practices, the PCNT can share

decision-making and information on the process with the MPDOE staff (Azorin et al., 2020; Kamp, 2018).

The network team facilitator will be essential to this process as they will be able to help the PCNT value

multiple points of view on their work and to consider various ways new ideas can be potentially

incorporated (White et al., 2019).

External Communication for the MPDOE Reform Process

Communication was a significant theme of the *Raise the Bar* (Glaze, 2018) report, and the

MPDOE's communication processes were specifically noted for being too unidirectional. Glaze (2018)

stipulated that the department must make "deliberate efforts to have at least two-way communication

so that the needs of and insights from those who are expected to do the work can be incorporated" (p.

43). As a result of this directive, the MPDOE developed an external communication model, as identified

in Figure 16, that embeds partner and stakeholder identification and input processes to provide avenues

for CFE and community co-development of messaging.

For the purpose of communicating the implementation plans for the renewed curricula, the

communications team at the MPDOE will work closely with the PCNT to ensure that messaging is crafted

in a collaborative manner. The CFEs and community partners will also be able to provide input and

feedback. This type of communication will facilitate a more responsive and inclusive process for the

curricula implementation process (Glaze, 2018). Relying on inclusive, distributed, and systems leadership

approaches, decisions regarding final communications to the public will be made in consultation with

the aforementioned groups and senior leadership at the MPDOE. These communications will need to

align with the overall messaging for the provincial education reform process—supporting the outcomes of successful KMb (Glaze, 2018).

Figure 16

Dialogic Communication Strategy: External Communication
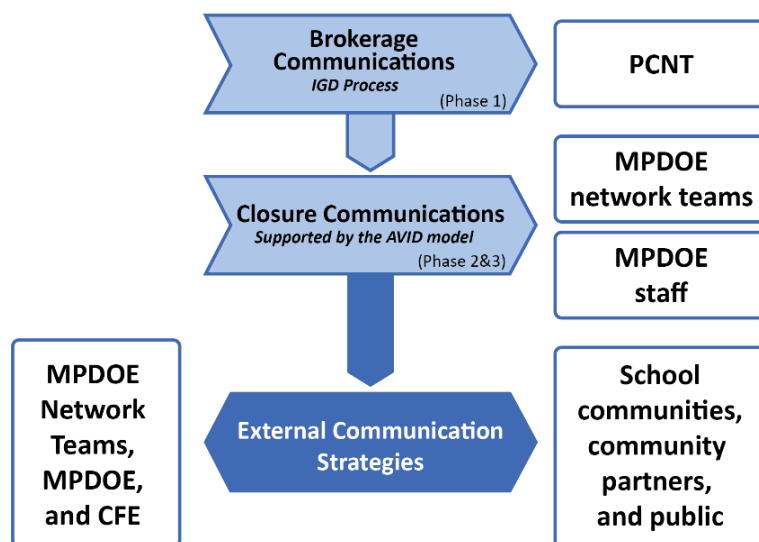
Note. AVID = alignment, voice, identification, and dialogue; CFE = Centres for Education; IGD = intergroup dialogue; MPDOE = Maritime Province Department of Education; PCNT = program network coordinator team.

KMb through a networked governance structure lies at the heart of MPDOE reform and defines a more inclusive and responsive model of problem-solving for actioning change. However, without effective communication strategies supporting each phase of the change plan, the PCNT will be unable to make the important connections to share and build upon their innovations for curricula implementation. Expanding upon the dialogic framework that facilitates the social-relational processes for the development of the PCNT, the communication plan for this OIP supports an interactive and responsive model for communicating the evolving and complex plans of inclusive education reform.

Chapter 3 Conclusion

The PoP that defines this OIP emerges from a provincial inclusive education reform process which has set in motion a restructuring of governance through mandated networks teams in support of

inclusive education reform process. As a change leader in the MPDOE, my role is to facilitate the development of the PCNT to ensure that this diverse collection of MPDOE and CFE staff and Indigenous and African Canadian community partners are able engage in the intergroup and socio-relational learning necessary to emerge as a social justice and equity-focused collaborative dedicated to tackling the complex work of developing the provincial curricula implementation plan. The selection of an externally facilitated four-stage IDG process and a principle focused monitoring and evaluation model to action the congruence model's transformational process and the Liberatory Learning for Social Justice Leadership framework ensures that all members of the of the PCNT develop the attributes and competences necessary for the collective efforts to plan the provincial curricula implementation plan. The KMb and inclusive communication strategy detailed in the chapter strives to ensure that any knowledge gaps in the system are addressed for the important work of communicating and actioning the curricula implementation process. Indeed, it is the final section of this OIP, that I explore the actioning of the curricula implementation plan and the potentials for ongoing change and evolution of the MPDOE.

Next Steps and Future Considerations

Education organizations that choose to engage in transformational processes dedicated to inclusive and participatory practices have committed to a pathway of evolution and growth (Azorin, 2020; Fullan, 2016; Hargreaves & Ainscow, 2015). The MPDOE has just started on this journey of transformational change. The development of a network team committed to equity-focused and collaborative models of learning and knowledge sharing to plan for curricula implementation is part of a significant organizational and governance reform for the MPDOE. This shift in governance has had a tremendous impact on my role as a change leader in the organization. Beyond my work with my MPDOE division, I am responsible for co-leading and facilitating a new governing network team that will be critical to ongoing change scenarios within the organization. This necessary reimagining and redesigning

of the system to support a long-awaited inclusive education reform will precipitate multiple change

scenarios that will require an appreciation for the complexity and fluidity of varied change processes

(Azorin, 2020).

        The enacting of the curricula implementation plan will set in motion a range of scenarios that

will require support from all levels of the system—testing the collaborative model and leadership

approaches that the organization is striving to develop and strengthen. Indeed, the relationship building

and dialogical processes that were selected and utilized for the development of the PCNT will need to be

examined to determine if these models were successful in developing a network learning and leadership

culture that can sustain and support ongoing reform actions. As a change leader (and change learner) in

the organization, this process is an opportunity to support ongoing knowledge-sharing, learning, and

capacity-building with a wide range of members of the organization and with external partners.

Actioning the Implementation Plan

        Efforts to move the PCNT's curricula implementation plan into action will require actors from

various levels and spheres within the organization to engage in inclusive, distributed, and systems

leadership approaches as they work together to support the process (Azorin et al., 2020; Kamp, 2018;

Ryan, 2014). This will largely entail support staff from the CFE and the MPDOE coordinating efforts to

support change plans throughout the system. The work of ensuring teachers and school administrators

have access to ongoing and timely professional learning opportunities will be critical to the success of

the implementation as the renewed curricula necessitate new methodologies to create learning

environments that support inclusive and culturally responsive learning experiences (Amiot et al., 2020;

Liou et al., 2019). While the CFE all have staff who support Indigenous and African Canadian students,

this process will require inclusive and distributed leadership practices to ensure that the professional

learning sessions supporting the implementation process are reflective of the concerns, needs, and the

collective expertise of historically marginalized communities (Azorin et al., 2020; Glaze, 2018; Ryan,

2018). The success of this process will be largely dependent upon change leaders, such as me, engaging in systems leadership approaches to ensure that the communication strategies enacted throughout the curricula planning and implementation process are effective and supportive of the varied teams and individuals throughout the organization (Kamp, 2018; Linke & Zerfass, 2011). As this will be a multi-year implementation scenario, any new support staff from the MPDOE and CFE will need to have access to the innovations gleaned from the PCNT so that they can effectively facilitate the implementation process. Beyond the necessary information to support change, support staff from the MPDOE and actors within the other network teams may also benefit from the facilitated IGD processes utilized for the development of the PCNT (Nagda, 2019).

Future Considerations for Supporting Network Development

The selection of the IGD process to facilitate the development of a collaborative network team that required the abilities to readily embrace social justice beliefs and the collective will to engage in equity-focused action to support and lead social justice change emerges as a very new direction for team-based professional learning at the MPDOE (Buckley & Quaye, 2016; Museus et al., 2017). Indeed, this professional learning model stands in stark contrast to the professional learning offering from the province's Public Service Commission (Maritime Province, 2021). The Public Service Commission's team building professional learning sessions are designed to support hierarchical governance models and traditional leader-follower leadership styles using the DISC (dominance, influence, steadiness, conscientiousness) assessment (Maritime Province, 2021; Mineo, 2014). The DISC assessment provides information on behavioural tendencies that can support leaders who are striving to influence and shape working cultures (Mineo, 2014). The use of the IDG and the Liberatory Learning for Social Justice Leadership framework to support the PCNT provides an opportunity for the MPDOE to rethink how it facilitates the development of networked leadership practices and governance models (Buckley & Quaye, 2016; Museus et al., 2017; Rincon-Gallardo & Fullan, 2016).

While the IGD and the Liberatory Learning for Social Justice Leadership processes hold promise for developing dynamic and inclusive learning and leadership cultures within the MPDOE, these models will need to be reviewed for their effectiveness and the specific facilitation they require. As IGD requires delving into self-reflection and the examination of often emotionally charged topics related to individual identities and experiences, specialized facilitation from a highly trained professional (often a community-based psychologist or an education psychologist) is recommended (White et al., 2019). The information gleaned from the PDSA cycles and the external research on the inclusive education reform process should yield valuable information to determine a new potential pathway for supporting the development of effective network teams for the MPDOE that embrace inclusive, distributed, and systems leadership approaches (Azorin et al., 2020; Johnson, 2016; Kamp, 2018; Ryan, 2014).

The shift to a network governance structure for the MPDOE provides a pathway for much-needed relationship building within the organization to plan and problem-solve for the successful implementation process of renewed curricula. However, as this is a system still maneuvering to find its footing amongst substantive change, there will be ongoing challenges to this process that will need to be considered. The MPDOE's commitment to ongoing research, KMb, and review of its inclusive education reform provides the means to improve and alter the varied aspects of the organization's change process to hopefully emerge as a system that better meets the needs of the historically marginalized communities that have long advocated for much needed change.

Narrative Epilogue

My journey to embark upon an EdD in Educational Leadership at Western University emerged from challenges that I faced as I attempted to support the curricula implementation process in my province. While my team and I had engaged in a successful curricula design process with a range of diverse partners and a large contingent of dedicated and dynamic teachers, the shift to implementation with the school regions fell flat. While the MPDOE had started the process of moving towards a

horizontal model of governance, the new network teams that were tasked with shouldering the daunting task of collectively supporting inclusive education reform, while simultaneously striving to learn to work and lead together, floundered in their efforts. While I had a responsibility as a change leader to support this process, I found my skill sets and knowledgebase limited with this novel challenge. I had engaged in supporting team development in the past but never at this level of complexity, and certainly never with such diverse groups tasked with such important change goals. I needed to engage in a new learning process that afforded me the expertise of educational researchers, academics, and practitioners to help guide me on this quest to explore varied models of learning, leading, and support for this new model of governance to support inclusive education reform for my province.

Through the guidance of my professors and the support of my fellow students, I have been able to engage in a learning journey that has provided much-needed insight into the learning processes necessary to facilitate the development of a network team at the MPDOE that is focused on social justice action for change in support of inclusive education reforms, including the curricula implementation process. I have been invited to share the Liberatory Learning for Social Justice Change framework and the IGD process with my fellow MPDOE directors, and members of my curriculum development team have been asked to help the province's Public Service Commission redesign some of their professional learning seminars to focus on inclusive and equity-focused practices. This OIP has provided a blueprint for the development of a new model for leading and learning within my division at the MPDOE and it is helping to shape practices throughout the entire organization.

While there are obvious personal rewards for engaging with a challenging academic program, the value of the learning for this organizational improvement plan transcends well beyond a theoretical change model. This learning experience has served to reaffirm my values as an educator and education leader, and it has provided a much-needed path to guide the work of my team at the MPDOE as we continue to support inclusive education reform.

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Appendix A: Maritime Province's Governance Structure Before and After Reform

Figure A1
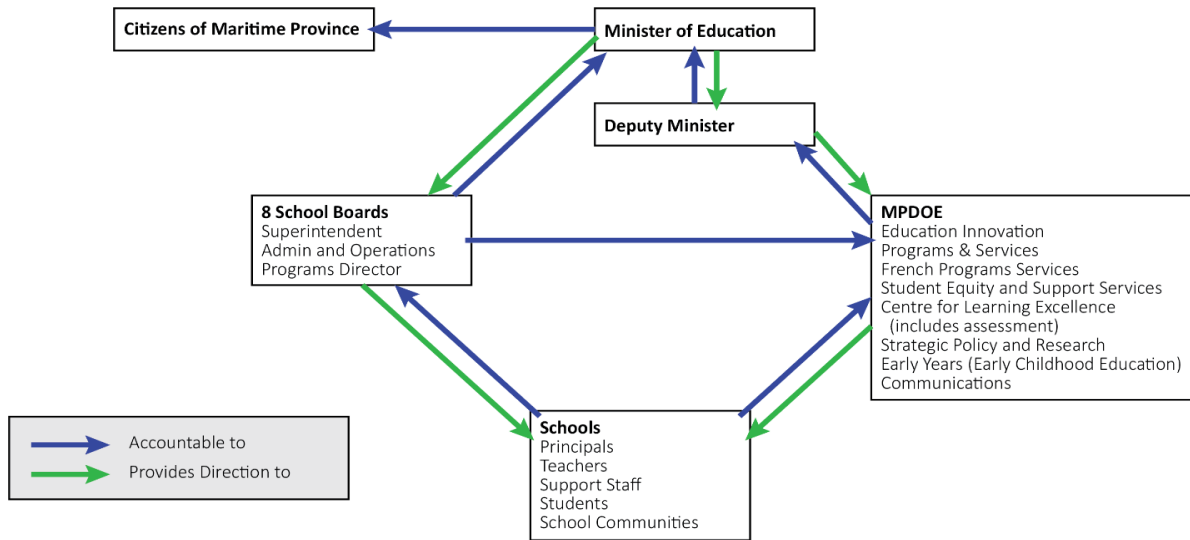
Maritime Province's Governance Structure Before Reform
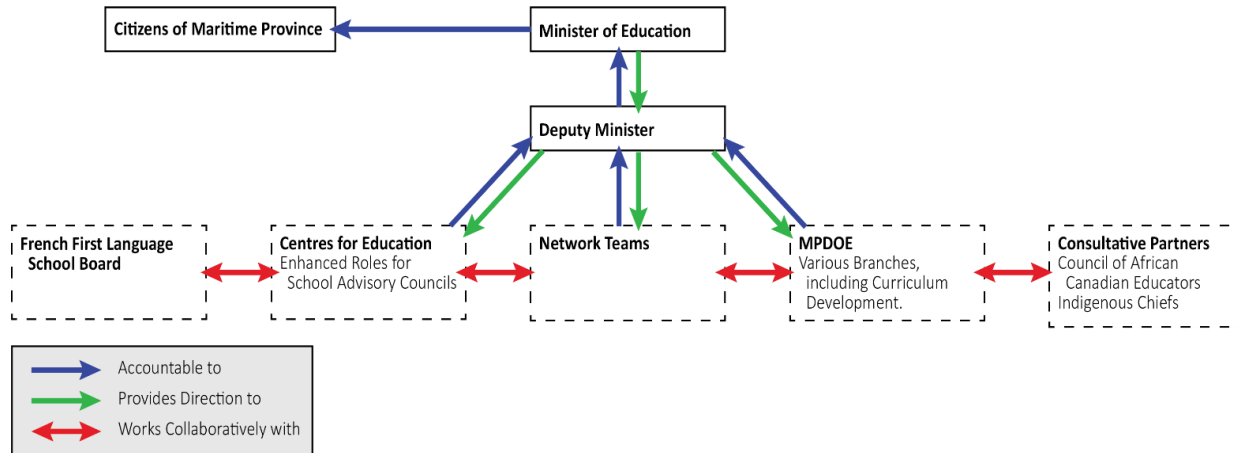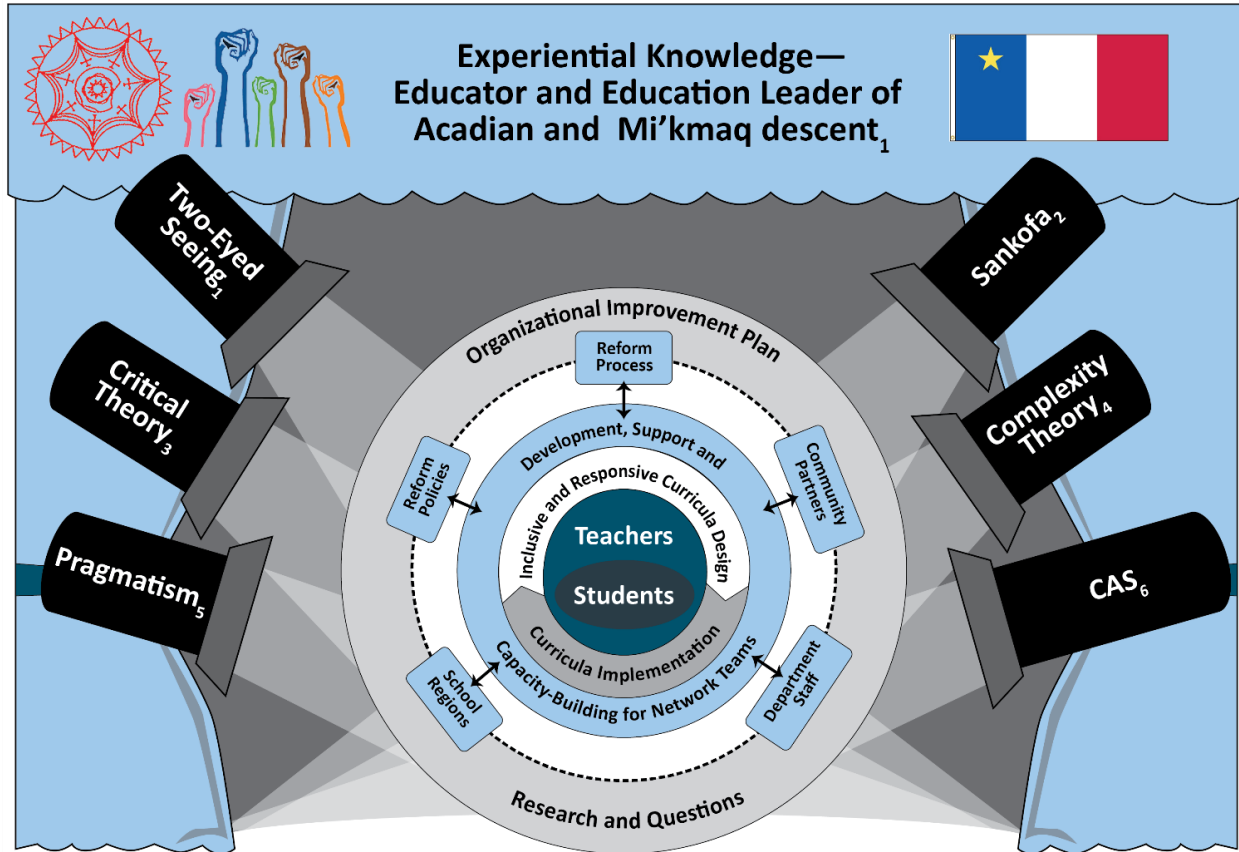

Figure A2

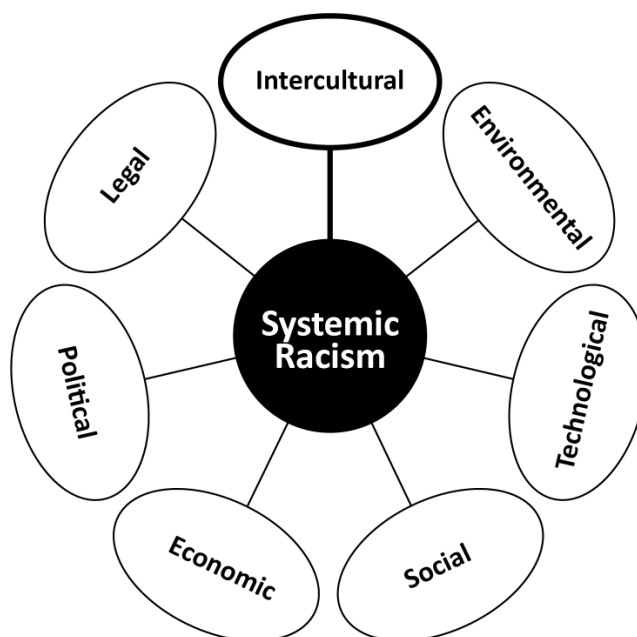*Maritime Province's Governance Structure Post Reform*

Appendix B: Conceptual Framework

1. Two-Eyed Seeing – Bartlett, et al., 2015
2. Sankofa – Wason & Widdan, 2016
3. Critical Theory – Bronner, 2011; Steinberg & Kincheloe, 2010
4. Complexity Theory, Mason, 2016
5. Pragmatism - Pavis & Gkiosos, 2017
6. CAS – Edson & McGee, 2016

Appendix C: SPEELIT Analysis

Note: Adapted from "Environment coding: A new method using the SPELIT environmental analysis matrix," by J. Saldana and L. Mallette, 2017, Qualitative Inquiry, *23*(2), p. 166. (https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800416679143).

Intercultural SPEELIT Analysis for the MPDOE	
Intercultural – differences between cultures that impact an organization	For the SPEELIT analysis for the MPDOE, an intercultural focus is a weighted and overarching element that focuses the lens of systemic racism within the other 6 elements.
Social – focuses on how people interact within various groups	This analysis looks to the impact of systemic racism on the lived experiences of Indigenous and African Canadian people within the province.
Political - processes of decision-making and power	This analysis looks at the impact of systemic racism and political authority and decision-making on the lives of Indigenous and African Canadian people in relation to access to power, decision-making, and leadership positions.
Economic – access to varied resources	This analysis addresses the varied economic impacts of systemic racism upon the lives of Indigenous and African Canadian people.
Environmental – interaction and impacts upon the physical environment	This analysis bring attention to the impact of environmental racism on Indigenous and African Canadian communities in the province.
Legal – laws and policies that impact an organization/people	This analysis looks at the impact of systemic racism on education legislation and policies regarding Indigenous and African Canadian communities.
Technological – technological tools that can be used to solve problems/become more efficient	This analysis looks at the impact of systemic racism on access to technologies that could improve learning opportunities for Indigenous and African Canadian communities in the province.

Appendix D: Sample of MPDOE Employee Readiness Change Survey

Survey area	Agreement
Quality of Change Communication	52%
• Two-way communication is valued in the organization	
• Clearly articulated change goals are provided by the organization	
• Staff are consulted for change decisions	
Attitudes of Leadership Towards Change	65%
• Leadership is involved in change	
• Leadership supports change	
Climate for Change	63%
• Value of staff and their roles within the organization	
• There is collegiality and support for relationship building within the organization	
Emotional Readiness for Change	61%
• Change is a positive experience	
• Change is refreshing	
Cognitive Readiness for Change	60%
• Change will improve my work	
• Plans for improvements will positively shift the organization	
Intentional Readiness for Change	73%
• I want to devote myself to the change process	
• I am willing to make contributions to the change process	
• I will put energy into the change process	

Note. Agreement of 60% and above among raters indicates a positive change readiness trend; 50% to 59% indicates an area for concern in relation to change readiness; 49% or less indicates a negative change readiness trend.

Appendix E: Solutions Table

Solution	Description and benefits
Solution 1 Collaborative Planning: Curricula Design Team and the Program Coordinator Network Team	**Description:** The PCNT will work collaboratively with the curricula design team to review, refine, and potentially redevelop an implementation plan originally developed by the teachers from the curricula design team. **Benefits:** The process provides an opportunity for engaging in key network development features as per the Network Features for System Change Model described in Chapter 1 of this OIP (Rincon-Gallardo & Fullan, 2016). The work of relationship-building and dialogue for shared understanding of perspectives and worldviews as per the SALT Model will be a key component of this process (Museus et al., 2017). The SALT model also supports the development of essential inclusive, distributed, and systems leadership approaches to support the change process in the province. Through engaging in the discussions regarding the draft implementation plan, developed by the teacher team, there is an opportunity to engage in collaborative critical inquiry and problem-solving utilizing double-loop and deutero learning that supports the development of an essential culture for on-going learning within the team and the organization (Argyris & Schon, 1996). **Risks/Limitations:** The PCNT is new to engaging in this work and has not had dedicated time to understand their roles and responsibilities as a network team. With this, there could be a reluctance to share ideas with each other and the curricula design team and, indeed, engage with the entire process of working as a network team (Rincon-Gallardo & Fullan, 2016). Where the perspectives and worldview of Indigenous and African Canadian team members are essential to this process, this is a particularly concerning risk/limitation with this model. If the team is not able to engage meaningfully in the process, Indigenous and African Canadian voices may not be heard or valued in the process. Dedicated time for the development of a network team is essential for its success in supporting equity-based change within the system (Diaz-Gibson et al., 2017; Gonzalez et al., 2020; Rincon-Gallardo & Fullan, 2016). **Resources:** This solution requires additional costs for substitute teachers from the curricula design team. There are funds to cover the costs of the development of network team as per the provincial reform process. However, substitute costs would be an additional factor.

Solution	Description and benefits
Solution 2 **Curricula Review Process with the Program Coordinator Network Team**	**Description:** The PCNT would work collaboratively with the curricula design team and regional support specialists on the review of the renewed curricula to glean a better understanding of the supports that would be needed within an implementation process. **Benefits:** A review process is always beneficial for any curricula design. It has the benefit of strengthening the work. A review process can determine potential issues within the design of curricula that needs to be altered in advance of the implementation process. Like Solution 1, the process provides an opportunity for engaging in key network development features such a relationship-building and dialogue for shared understanding of perspectives and worldview. It provides opportunities for collaborative critical inquiry and problem solving. This is also an excellent opportunity for the new program coordinator network team to glean a stronger and more in-depth understanding of the renewed curricula. By taking the time to discuss the curricula development process with the design team, both the PCNT and staff from the school regions could identify the various supports that would need to be developed within the regions to support the implementation. There are also opportunities to share resources across regions. **Risks/Limitations:** The risks and limitations are the same as Solution 1. This solution also puts more pressure on the school regions with more staff out of schools to support this process. **Resources:** This solution requires additional funds for substitute teachers for support staff and teachers from the school regions.
Solution 3 **Focused Development of the Program Coordinator Network Team**	**Description:** This solution provides a dedicated time for the network team to develop the learning culture necessary for the team to effectively work the development of the curricula implementation plan. **Benefits:** The process provides dedicated time for the team to engage in all of the key network development features such a relationship-building and dialogue for shared understanding of perspectives and worldview (Rincon-Gallardo & Fullan, 2016). For Indigenous and African Canadian team members, it is important that a safe learning space is created for their worldviews and perspectives to be expressed, understood, and valued by the team; this is a critical component of the SALT model and requires dedicated time for all members to thoughtfully engage in this process (Museus et al., 2017; Rincon-Gallardo & Fullan, 2016). This important work would need to be supported by an external facilitator who could act as a critical friend to ensure fidelity in the development process. As the change facilitator for this process, I would need to ensure that a safe and inclusive learning climate is created and maintained in order for the important work of inclusive network development to flourish.

Solution	Description and benefits
	As identified in the table below: the program coordinator network team would engage in building the essential network features through the SALT model that also aligns with inclusive, distributed, and systems approaches to leadership.

Network Leadership	Network Features	SALT Model Connections
Partnering for system Change (Inclusive Leadership)	• Building trust and capacity to action social justice change • Learning from one another • Ensuring voice and partnership for historically marginalized communities	• empathy for enhanced understanding on oppressed communities • an understanding of the historic and contemporary forms of oppressions • commitment to advance social justice • to seek equity within inclusive leadership settings • have the courage to confront oppression
Creating Conditions for Collaboration (Distributed Leadership)	• Collaborative inquiry • Leadership within a flattened structure • Commitment to ongoing collaborative work	• embrace collective action for change
Boundary Spanning (Systems Leadership)	• Focus on system goals	to coalesce understandings of systemic inequity and

Solution	Description and benefits
	<table><tr><td></td><td>• Securing of resources to support system change</td><td>act for meaningful change</td></tr></table>
The third solution will be combined with the other two solutions to create a proposed solution to the problem of practice.	Engaging with the building the essential network features through the identified leadership approaches requires sustained opportunities for collaborative critical inquiry and problem solving through deuteron and double-loop learning (Argyris & Schon, 1996). Through these intellectual exercises, team members can build the important reflexive skills for on-going learning. **Risks/Limitations:** Taking the time to focus on the development of key network features delays the development of a curricula implementation plan. **Resources:** This plan requires the support of an external facilitator to act as a critical friend to support the more challenging conversations that are common in the early phases of network team development. This is an additional cost for this process. There is also a need to ensure that sufficient time is dedicated to support the development of the team.

Appendix F: Multiphase Change Process

Table F1

Phase 1 Components

Phase 1: Support for the Development of the Program Coordinator Network Team	
Goals/Priorities	Development of the Program Coordinator Network Team ▪ Stage one focuses on the development of a social justice-focused PCNT through a facilitated intergroup dialogue process aligned with the SALT model and key network features development (Rincon-Gallardo & Fullan, 2016; Museus et al., 2017; Wilkins-Yel et al., 2020). ▪ This process focuses on a network team dedicated to actioning inclusive education reforms through empowering historically marginalized communities for the change process. For this phase, the PCNT will learn about Indigenous and African Canadian ways of knowing and being through Two-Eyed Seeing and Sankofa.
Personnel/Partners	▪ Regional Program Coordinators ▪ MPDOE directors, including Indigenous and African Canadian branches ▪ Community partners from Indigenous and African Canadian communities ▪ External Network Team Facilitator with training in Intergroup Dialogue (IDG) (Ideal Credentials: Education or Community-Based Psychologist) (White et al., 2019).
Strategy for Change (participant responsibilities)	External facilitator to engage the network team in a 4-stage critical intergroup dialogue (IGD) process (Nagda, 2019). ▪ Through a network leadership praxis as defined by inclusive, distributed, and systems Leadership and the SALT model, the Director of Curriculum will work with the team through the all four components of the Congruence Model transformational process (focusing on all four components of the transformation process – the structure of the new network team, the diversity of people, culture of collaborative efforts, and the work to support the reform process) to help make the connections to the change process as per the Raise the Bar (2018) report; the key change items for the renewed curricula and implementation; and the necessary focus on the shared responsibility for change within the team and across the system for the implementation and change process (Azorin et al., 2020; Campbell, 2019; Liou et al., 2019). ▪ Both the external facilitator and the Director of Curriculum Development will review the new administrative design for the system, including the organization and composition of other network committees/teams developed for a long- term, re-orientation change process

Phase 1: Support for the Development of the Program Coordinator Network Team	
Implementation Process	▪ External facilitation of the 4 stage IGD process will consist of the following: ◦ Stage 1 – focus on developing foundational dialogue skills such as active listening, asking probing questions, and making the time to learn from others. ◦ Stage 2 – fostering in-depth exploration and understanding of social identities, ways of knowing and being, and social inequalities, with a focus on Indigenous and African Canadian experiences. This phase supports the development of critical consciousness. ◦ Stage 3 – engage in discussions about the impacts of systemic racism and the oppressive inequalities experienced by marginalized communities. This stage provides opportunities to learn about the intersectionality of identities and the issues of inequality. ◦ Stage 4 – participants engage in conversations about the responsibilities of acting to address inequalities within a range of spheres. This stage provides the skills for effective collaborative processes to strengthen relationships to support collective social justice action. ▪ Conversations would also need to include a focus on inclusive, distributed, and systems-based models of leadership that are essential for this process. ▪ Conversations will need to include a discussion of other network committees in order for the PCNT to glean a better understanding of work and processes across the system, mindful of the change process and the goals/tasks of the curricula implementation process that must be inclusive and equitable to all involved. ▪ The four stages of the IGD process are centred primarily upon an understanding and validation of participants experiences, ways of knowing and being – critical in the support of Indigenous and African Canadian network members - and the skills necessary for effective leadership and collaboration for social justice change (Nagda, 2019). The process will be monitored and evaluated using selected psychometrics. The external facilitator may select to bring in a third party to review and validate results.
Issues/Limitations	▪ Securing and confirming dedicated time to meet ▪ Securing funds and approval to secure an external facilitator for the team ▪ The external facilitator is critical to supporting dialogue that must delve into controversial issues of systemic racism. This process can extend the timeline for IGD processes – depending on the level of support a team may need

Phase 1: Support for the Development of the Program Coordinator Network Team	
	▪ Ensuring commitment from the regions and the department for this team to engage with this process.
Supports/Resources	▪ Agreement from senior network teams for the network team development – time and resources for team to meet and work ▪ Funds for the hiring of an external facilitator, approximately $60,000 contract with provincial Public Service Commission. ▪ Costs for space and associated travel and accommodation costs for any in-person components of the network meetings.
Timeline	▪ Start immediately and continue throughout the stages. ▪ The IGD process typically takes 4 to 6 weeks and will need to be revisited periodically as the team progresses through various consultative and problem-solving endeavours in phases 2 and 3. ▪ The timeline for this process could be extended based on results from the monitoring and evaluation components of the process.

Table F2

Phase 2 Components

Phase 2: Review Curricula with Curricula Design Team, Regional Staff, & Program Coordinator Network Team	
Goals/Priorities	▪ Curricula design team to conduct a review process of the renewed curricula with the PCNT and selected staff from their regions ▪ This process allows for a review process, an opportunity for the Curricula design team to collaborate with the PCNT, and for all actors to engage in the leadership practices that are integral for a successful implementation
Personnel/Partners	▪ Curricula design team (comprised of teachers from all 7 school regions, department staff, and community partners) ▪ PCNT ▪ External Network Team Facilitator
Strategy for Change (participant responsibilities)	▪ This is an opportunity for the curricula design team, to engage with the PCNT in a review process of the renewed curricula. This highlights how the design team engaged in inclusive and distributed leadership roles within the school regions and across the province for this process (Azorin et al., 2020; Campbell, 2020; Liou et al., 2019). ▪ Inclusive Leadership philosophy : This is an opportunity for the PCNT (supported by the external facilitator and the Director of Curriculum Development) to work with African Canadian and Indigenous department consultants and partners to glean a better understanding of the equity and cultural components of the curricula. This is also an opportunity for Indigenous and African

Phase 2: Review Curricula with Curricula Design Team, Regional Staff, & Program Coordinator Network Team	
	Canadian support staff from the regions to see their enhanced roles in the process (Campbell, 2020; Ryan, 2014). ▪ This process allows for a stronger understanding of the renewed curricula and potential supports for teachers and schools within a multiyear and iterative implementation process. ▪ This is also an opportunity for a continuation of the IGD process (Nagda, 2019) and for the network team to engage in problem solving and planning supported by double-loop and deutero learning (Argyris & Schon, 1996). ▪ In relation to the Transformational process, this phase particularly focuses on the work and culture of the network team (Nadler & Tushman, 1989).
Implementation Process	▪ Collaborative review sessions co-facilitated by the curricula design team, the Director of Curriculum Development, and the external facilitator. ▪ Sessions will be focused on the design of the renewed curricula ▪ The sessions provide an opportunity for the PCNT and school regional staff to glean an understanding of the curricula design with a focus on the use of competencies, skills, and new culturally responsive content components. ▪ The PCNT, and selected regional staff, can provide feedback on the curricula and gain insights on how to best support the implementation in their regions and across the province within the larger, iterative, and transformational change process. ▪ The external facilitator will continue with the use of psychometric assessments to gauge the development of the team. ▪ As a co-facilitator, I will review this phase's goal of the PCNT gleaning a strong understanding of the renewed curricula with all three groups to determine if the PCNT is ready to move to phase 3 of the process.
Issues/Limitations	▪ Thorough review of curricula includes discussions on pedagogy, teaching methodologies, and new cultural concepts, requires time for in-depth discussions. This process will mean securing release time for program staff at all of the provincial school regions. This will need to be approved by senior staff at the department and the regions. ▪ There are additional costs for this process as teachers and support staff will require substitutes while they are away from their schools engaging in the review process. This will need to be approved by senior staff at the department and the regions (new, separate network team). ▪ Costs could be mitigated with the use of online meetings (although this format has limitations with groups that are new to one another and to a process)
Supports/Resources	▪ Renewed curricula guides, and draft support resources

Phase 2: Review Curricula with Curricula Design Team, Regional Staff, & Program Coordinator Network Team	
	○ Treaty Education, Inclusive Education, and African Canadian Education frameworks ○ Universal Design for Learning, Assessment, and Culturally Responsive Learning provincial documents ○ Indigenous and African Canadian partners' resources ▪ Funds for substitute teachers ▪ Funds for staff who must travel and require accommodations and meals
Timeline	▪ 6 weeks after stage 1 has commenced. (This will be a staggered process for review of individual disciplines to avoid disruption to the system). This phase could also be delayed based on additional time the first phase may need depending on how well the IGD proceeds. This process should take approximately 4 to 6 weeks.

Table F3

Phase 3 Components

Phase 3: Planning the Implementation with the Teacher Curricula Design Team and the Program Coordinator Network Team	
Goals/Priorities	▪ Curricula design team to work collaboratively with the PCNT on the planning for the provincial curricula implementation ▪ This stage allows for the PCNT to work collaboratively on the planning process for the provincial curricula implementation. The factors of the change process will be actioned through the leadership models.
Personnel/Partners	▪ Curricula design team ▪ Program Coordinators' Network Team ▪ External Network Team Facilitator ▪ MPDOE network teams ▪ MPDOE Curricula Development Staff ▪ Senior Staff at the MPDOE and CFE
Strategy for Change (participant responsibilities)	▪ Continuing with the inclusive, distributed, and systems models of leadership that informed and supported the curricula design and review processes, the Teacher Curricula Design Team and the PCNT (supported by the external facilitator and the Director of Curriculum Development) work collaboratively to problem solve and chart the course for the multiyear provincial implementation of the renewed curricula (Azorin et al., 2020; Campbell, 2020; Liou et al., 2019). ▪ The PCNT will also have the opportunity to work with other MPDOE network teams and senior system staff to review and provide feedback

Phase 3: Planning the Implementation with the Teacher Curricula Design Team and the Program Coordinator Network Team	
	• on the plan. This part of the process highlights the importance of systems leadership for the process. • This work continues with the IGD process and double-loop and deutero learning (Argyris & Schon, 1996; Nadler & Tushman, 1989).
Implementation Process	• Collaborative dialogue regarding the development of various professional learning supports for teachers in the initial pilot phase of the implementation – cross-regional PLCs; school PLCs; professional learning sessions at the school, regional, and provincial levels; coaching; and co-teaching opportunities • Identifying how regions would engage regional staff (including members from the Teacher Curricula Design team) to support schools and teachers • Identifying the integration of implementation research and data collection for the pilot within the MPDOEs use of a developmental evaluation model for the reform process. • Identify model for development of learning resources to support the renewed curricula- particular focus on resources to support, key cultural components • The process will be monitored and evaluated using selected psychometrics. The external facilitator may select to bring in a third party to review and validate results. • This phase will be further evaluated through the CFE and MPDOE senior staffs' acceptance of the implementation plan. • The curricula implementation plan will be monitored and evaluated in the system through diagnostics determined by the curricula implementation plan.
Issues/Limitations	• The PCNT is still relatively new to the is process and may need more time to work through the number of items for this process. • This process will still require CFE, MPDOE and teachers time away from their regular responsibilities • There are additional costs related to substitutes, travel, and accommodations. • Approval for time and funds will need to be sought from senior department and regional staff • Support and approval for the implementation plan will need to be sought from senior leadership tables at the MPDOE and RCE.
Supports/Resources	• Review of research regarding supports for effective, large-scale curricula implementation (focus on current research and national jurisdictional scan) • Completed curricula guides and supporting documents for the renewed curricula

Phase 3: Planning the Implementation with the Teacher Curricula Design Team and the Program Coordinator Network Team	
	- Funds for substitute teachers for the teacher curricula design team - Contract for independent university research team to gather data from the implementation process. Approximate cost $20,000 per year.
Timeline	- To take place immediately after the curricula review process is completed. - The initial planning process should be able to be completed within a 6 to 8 weeks-time span. This plan will need to be revisited and revised throughout the implementation process – next 2 to 3 years