8-17-2023

Embracing Diversity to Increase Belongingness and Foster a Culture of Success

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Abstract

The importance of social relationships and belonging (a fundamental human need that must be satisfied to enable positive relationship-building skills and physical and mental wellness) have been studied for decades. Research shows a strong sense of belongingness for students can positively impact their academic performance. Belongingness, or a connection to school, peers, and teachers, is strongly indicative of improved performance for historically marginalized, racially and culturally diverse students. St. Kizito school (pseudonym), an elementary school in a large urban center in Alberta, has a diverse demographic of students including many first-generation Canadians, new Canadians, and refugee students. School-based data shows that not all students have a strong connection to their school, teachers, or classmates. Some teachers may not be adequately prepared to use meaningful instructional strategies that promote belongingness for all students. Not all teacher training programs include instruction in cultural responsiveness and fostering meaningful connections. Therefore, it is proposed to provide such training at St. Kizito school through professional learning communities. Implementing pedagogical practices that allow teachers to support racially and culturally diverse students and promote a sense of belongingness are explored through authentic and culturally responsive school leadership and an inquiry change model.

Keywords: belongingness, relationships, academic performance, marginalized, racially and culturally diverse, professional learning communities, authentic leadership, culturally responsive school leadership

Executive Summary

Students can be at risk of failure because of the impact of their race or culture (Ladson-Billings, 2021). To increase the likelihood of success in schools, it is important teachers are prepared to support all students socially and academically. As the student demographic changes in Canadian schools and becomes more racially and culturally diverse, school leaders must ensure teachers are capable of culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP) that increases student belongingness and improves academic success. This organizational improvement plan (OIP) is a three-chapter investigation which explores a problem of practice (PoP) highlighting the need to build CRP and increase students' sense of belonging at an elementary school in a large urban center in Alberta.

Chapter one introduces the PoP and situates it in an organizational context. Most students at St. Kizito school (pseudonym) are racially and culturally diverse and they are at risk of failure because of their race or culture. Racialized students have historically been less successful than their white counterparts (Gray et al., 2018). To improve this gap in education, teachers must be prepared to embrace all students and ensure they all feel a sense of belonging in school. When students feel connected to school and have positive relationships with their teachers and peers, they are more likely to be successful academically (Allen et al., 2022).

The chosen theoretical underpinning for this OIP is a critical race theory (CRT) lens. When race is considered solely as an ideological construct or an objective state, it does not allow for understanding the profound impact it has on individuals who suffer the oppression of a racialized society (Ladson-Billings, 1998). Undoubtedly, racism and systemic inequities are deeply embedded in society and educational institutions (Capper, 2019; Hammond, 2020; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). By interpreting the challenges presented in

this OIP through a CRT lens, I am hopeful that most readers will acknowledge the pervasiveness of racism throughout history and within contemporary educational settings (Capper, 2019; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Theoharis, 2018).

Chapter two focuses on the leadership approach that will be used to propel change at St. Kizito school: authentic leadership and culturally responsive school leadership. The framework for leading the change process is then introduced: Descza et al.'s (2020) Change Path Model (CPM). The change plan is divided into four phases: awakening, mobilization, acceleration, and institutionalization. Solutions to the PoP are presented and compared and one is chosen to move the change path forward. Implementing professional learning communities (PLC) to enable staff to become more culturally responsive and increase students' sense of belongingness is deemed the most appropriate solution to address the challenges in the PoP.

Chapter three outlines the change implementation plan (CIP), the communication plan, and the strategy for monitoring and evaluation. The CPM will be used as the foundation for the CIP and will be organized using four phases for change. The communication plan will be outlined according to Klein's (1996) communication strategy for change. Evaluation and monitoring will be presented by using Deming's (1994) Plan, Do, Study, Act cycle during each of the four phases of the CIP. The OIP concludes with next steps and future considerations for the implementation of CRP and connecting students to school. Greater equitable practices and further work in equity, diversity, and inclusion are recommended.

Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge that I live, work, study, and play on the traditional territory of the peoples of the Treaty 7 region and Metis Nation, Region 3.

I would like to express deep gratitude to the professors who guided me throughout this doctoral journey. I owe much gratitude to Dr. Gary Swain for shepherding me throughout the last three years. Your expertise and guidance have been invaluable. I would also like to acknowledge Dr. Beate Planche for guiding me to the end. You have been an incredible source of encouragement. I was a part of the most amazing cohort of students during my studies. Thank you to my classmates for your inspiration and encouragement, the conversations, the advice, and the friendships.

My mother, the smartest woman I know, has been instrumental in all aspects of my life. She has read everything I've ever written and I'm certain she has read each iteration of this OIP, more than once, over the last three years. Thank you, Mom. You are a gift and an inspiration. Thank you to my husband. You believe in me, strengthen me, and you make sure I laugh every day. I appreciate the gift of time I get to spend with you, and I also very much appreciate all the time you spent without me while I was reading, studying, and writing. A special thank you to Carson, Evan, and Joel who continually supported me and never seemed to mind if I read or wrote while on a road trip, in a hotel, or during baseball practice. You have all supported me in my work and I believe you will all use your knowledge and opportunities to make change yourselves. I love you all more than you can imagine. Dann and Rachael, thank you for always being supportive. Thank you, Uncle Thomas, for taking an interest in my work. As a child I always wanted to be on your trivial pursuit team and as an adult I appreciated your knowledge even more. My immense gratitude, Tracy. I am so grateful for your love, friendship, support,

check-ins, and celebrations. Completing this is so much more meaningful knowing that you are all in my corner.

Lastly, I would like to acknowledge the gift of education. I am grateful that I can pursue an education and understand that not everyone in the world has this same opportunity. It is my dream that this will change.

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Acronyms

CIP	Change Implementation Plan
CPM	Change Path Model
CRP	Culturally Responsive Pedagogy
CRSL	Culturally Responsive School Leadership
CRT	Critical Race Theory
CTE	Collective Teacher Efficacy
HFSD	Holy Family School District
OIP	Organizational Improvement Plan
OSS	Our School Survey
PDSA	Plan, Do, Study, Act
PG	Professional Growth
PLC	Professional Learning Community
PoP	Problem of Practice
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats

Definitions

Achievement Gap: "In many countries, academic achievement levels of ethnic minority groups are lower than those of the ethnic majority" (Peterson et al, 2006, p. 123).

Authentic Leadership: is relational, develops over time, and authentic leaders "exhibit genuine leadership, lead from conviction, and are originals" (Northouse, 2019, p. 198).

Belongingness: "the extent to which students feel personally accepted, respected, included, and supported by others in the school social environment" (Goodenow & Grady, 1993, p. 80).

Capacity Building: Supporting teachers in building competencies, developing knowledge and skills, using resources wisely, and completing tasks collectively and continuously. (Fullan, 2008)

Culturally Responsive School Leadership: A school leader who exhibits critical self-reflection, develops culturally responsive teachers and curricula, promotes inclusive, anti-oppressive contexts, engages students' community contexts. (Khalifa, 2021, p. 13)

Equity in Education: Eliminating disparities and ensuring equal access to education and resources for the vulnerable and children in vulnerable situations (UNESCO, 2023).

Marginalization in Education: Schools were "initially developed for white, ,upper class males" and those who fall outside of this category (by language, ability, class, race) are expected to assimilate or are negatively labeled (Capper, 2019, p. 41).

Pedagogical Practices: The content and context of a teacher's instruction including subject knowledge and instructional strategies (Campbell et al., 2016).

Senior Administration: Members of the school district who oversee schools and principals; includes superintendents, directors, and supervisors.

Chapter 1: Introduction and Problem of Practice

This Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP) focuses on an elementary school in a large urban setting in Alberta with a school staff who aspire to foster a welcoming, inclusive, culturally responsive school culture of strong connection, belongingness, and academic success. Belonging is defined by Goodenow (1993a) as how well a student feels accepted by teachers and peers, how they feel valued and included, and how important they believe themselves to be in the classroom and social situations. The administrative team and teachers at St. Kizito school (pseudonym) recognize the diversity among the student demographic and realize the shortcomings of the mainstream educational environment for students. This mainstream setting may not be perceived as offering a welcoming, inclusive environment to students from culturally and linguistically varied backgrounds. Students who are racially and culturally diverse walk into a setting completely different from their life experience and this causes students to feel a lack of belongingness. Academic success does not often develop when students do not feel connected to their school and its surroundings; a result that is worsened when schools do not foster a sense of belonging (Allen et al., 2016, 2018; Korpershoek et al., 2020; Montoro et al., 2020).

This OIP includes an exploration of factors that have historically marginalized racially and culturally diverse students and caused students to lack a sense of belongingness in school. Critical race theory (CRT), as offered by Gloria Ladson-Billings (1998), has influenced my approach to this OIP. Having worked in a racially diverse urban centre for 20 years, I have witnessed the achievement gap - i.e., racialized students have lower average achievement levels than white students; (Peterson et al., 2016; Torrance et al., 2021) so I investigated how this relates to student belonging. I hope this OIP can help create a safer, more welcoming space for learning that addresses the racist structures in education. By centering belongingness in a

positive school culture and actively implementing culturally responsive pedagogical practices, the status quo can be disrupted allowing all students to succeed (Allen et al., 2018; Gay, 2015). As a scholar-practitioner, I apply a social justice lens to underpin this work and I believe it is important that everyone feels a sense of belonging at St. Kizito school. Theoharis (2007) contended that school administrators who confront issues of race and class are social justice leaders seeking to eliminate structures in education which have historically marginalized students. I intend to facilitate positive change for St. Kizito school's students by using the platform I am afforded by my administrative position and professional agency. Notably, my positionality is a critical factor in my approach, access, power, and ethical considerations in this study, and thus, the next section describes my positionality and lens.

Positionality and Lens Statement

The potential success of an OIP is influenced by various factors such as agency, positionality, and personal voice. The change leader's capacity and their perspective on leadership are crucial in guiding intended organizational improvements. This section identifies key aspects of me as a leader of change, including my position, responsibilities, beliefs, and leadership lens, and how these factors shape my professional practice.

Leadership Position as Principal of St. Kizito School

As a school principal in the Holy Family School District (HFSD) (pseudonym), I am responsible for the operation and management of a school while being accountable to senior administration and the board of trustees (HFSD, 2022b). I manage the day-to-day operations of the building, with the assistant principal, and we are committed to meeting the needs of the students and staff while making decisions aligned with the school district's mission and values. I am an instructional leader tasked with ensuring that teachers use sound pedagogical practices to

support students in meeting provincially mandated curricular outcomes. Principals are essential to schools' success and the development of excellence in teaching and student achievement (Fullan, 2000; Winton & Pollock, 2016). The principal is also responsible for the climate and culture of the building. As the principal, I can greatly impact how welcome staff and students feel in the building and whether there is a culture of belongingness—an essential element that predicates academic success (Allen et al., 2018; Hoy & Sabo, 1998). My leadership at St. Kizito school is crucial to fostering belongingness. When educators create an environment in which students feel comfortable, supported and capable, they eliminate barriers that devalue historically marginalized groups (Hammond, 2015). This supportive learning environment allows students—especially marginalized—to be more likely to establish connections, feel valued, and ultimately be more successful in school (Gray et al., 2018). According to Ladson-Billings (2021), students may be at risk of failure because of their race or background, and it is important to mitigate this risk for students at St. Kizito school. One avenue to mitigate this risk is to consider the voices of people from racialized communities (e.g., Black students at St. Kizito school).

Personal Voice

Research shows that white students typically outperform racialized students academically (Darling-Hammond, 2004; Hammond, 2015; Khalifa, 2021). Research also shows that Black students are four times more likely than white students to be disciplined using exclusionary practices (Darling-Hammond, 2023). Many theories have been put forth to explain this discrepancy including quality of instruction, teacher turnover, teacher expectations, and social structural explanations (Darling-Hammond, 2023; Khalifa, 2021; Wiggan, 2007). Racialized students often feel undervalued, and some have reported not feeling like they belong in academic settings (Gray et al., 2018). Research shows that fostering a welcoming and safe educational

environment can help traditionally marginalized students thrive in schools (Gray et al., 2018; Murphy & Zirkel, 2015; Wegmann, 2017; Wiggan, 2007). Culturally responsive educators who use students' experiences, knowledge, and culture to enhance their instructional practices can contribute to a school culture of belongingness, well-being, and academic success (Gay, 2018; Hammond, 2015; Khalifa et al., 2016; Khalifa, 2021; Pinto, 2013). Given that cultural responsiveness is so critical in educators, it is also important for educators and leaders of educators to be conscious of their own positionality and how that affects their work and social interactions with students and school staff. Thus, the next subsection describes my positionality in relation to this study and my role as an educator and principal.

Positionality

My personal journey has led me to have a critical worldview and a desire to improve student belongingness through culturally responsive leadership. As a white, female school principal, I understand that my privilege and perspective shape how I interpret my surroundings and interact with staff and students. My personal history informs my practices and decision-making daily and I strive to create an equitable learning environment where everyone feels equally safe and supported. I recognize that as a white, female leader, I possess an inherent responsibility to champion students and challenge systemic racism, sexism, and other intersecting forms of oppression in the educational system. Ladson-Billings (1998) emphasized that, "it is because of the meaning and value imputed to whiteness that CRT becomes an important intellectual and social tool" (p. 9). Those in positions of power and privilege must recognize the socially constructed meaning and value of whiteness to create more equitable learning environments. Ideally, dismantling racist structures in the education system should not be necessary. However, given the disparities in schools between white and racialized students,

educational leaders must consider the significance of whiteness (Khalifa, 2021; Ladson-Billings, 1998, 2021). Racism is deeply embedded in school structures and does not need to be overt to exist. CRT points to the pervasiveness of racism and is the lens through which I view education and my work (Capper, 2019; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Theoharis, 2018). Therefore, I advocate for students and will continue to use my platform to promote constructive dialogue exploring justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion. Through personal conversations with St. Kizito school staff, I have learned that 86% of staff members identify as white, whereas according to survey data, less than 20% of students identify as white (HFSD, 2022a). Thus, I endeavour to support and promote anti-racist allyship while carefully ensuring it is meaningful and not performative (Hesford, 2021). I use CRT to reinforce this process, which is explained in greater detail in the following section.

Critical Race Theory

Over 80% of students at St. Kizito school are English language learners, new Canadians, or first-generation Canadians and identify as racialized (HFSD, 2022a). In a recent school survey, many students expressed a lack of self-esteem and belongingness (HFSD, 2022a). Because of the diverse demographic of students in question, it is appropriate to use CRT to frame the problem of why some St. Kizito school students lack a connection to school and have been unsuccessful academically. To implement organizational change and effectively address equity issues, the work is grounded in CRT. Using this theoretical framework can facilitate culturally responsive school leadership that addresses equity issues. In the 1970s, CRT was born out of activism against the U.S. legal system's institutionalized racial injustices (Capper, 2019; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Solorzano & Yosso, 2002; Theoharis, 2018). As a framework for change, CRT

will support the administrative team as it tries to evolve the school to be culturally responsive, dismantling the racist systemic structures in education in Canada.

CRT challenges the traditional claims that schools are objective and meritocratic; rather, curriculum, discipline policies, and teacher perspectives—among other things—favour white students (Ladson-Billings, 1998; Solorzano & Yosso, 2002; Theoharis, 2018). Racialized students are viewed as subordinate and because of reduced access, support, and resources, are less successful academically (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). CRT is an important framework to underpin change intended to support school equity. Indeed, Ladson-Billings (1998) argued that CRT can be used for "deconstruction, reconstruction, and construction; deconstruction of oppressive structures and discourses, reconstruction of human agency, and construction of equitable and socially just relations of power" (p.9).

It is necessary to find innovative ways to deconstruct, reconstruct, and construct; deconstruct oppressive structures and narratives within the school, reconstruct the agency of students and families of traditionally marginalized groups, and construct equitable and socially just relationships for all within the school community. It is also necessary to challenge current practices and build a more socially just learning environment for students (Ladson-Billings, 1998, 2021). Racism and power dynamics have shaped educational opportunities and outcomes for different groups over time. CRT is based on the idea that racism has been embedded in Western institutional systems and structures since the West was colonized (Ladson-Billings, 1998). Looking through the lens of CRT, it is important to examine how marginalized communities, specifically racialized students, are disproportionately impacted by inequity. Using CRT as a foundation for racial justice work can support leaders at St. Kizito school in ensuring

they support staff in implementing instructional practices that will benefit all students. They must lead with the knowledge that there is necessary work to be done to address historical inequity.

Agency and Power

A school principal working within the HFSD can make decisions at the school level, but there is an expectation that the school-based leader will act in alignment with the district's mission, values, and the policies created by the board of trustees (HFSD, 2022b). School administrators are traditionally seen as conservative and perpetuators of systemic hierarchies and control in schools. However, they have the agency to challenge the current structures and be agents of change by being inclusive and transformative (Riehl, 2000; Theoharis, 2010). According to the Provincial Education Act (2023), a school principal must provide instructional leadership, ensure instruction aligns with provincial outcomes, and manage the school among other responsibilities. Most directly related to this OIP, a principal must "provide a warm, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging" (p. 150). School-level decision-making empowers principals and allows for stakeholder input while strengthening a mutual influence between school-based leaders and senior administration (HFSD, 2019). Hallinger and Heck (1998) noted in their research that principals who support teacher efficacy and focus deliberately on student learning can make a significant difference in student achievement. Principals are leaders who, within their sphere of influence, must be agents of change while building the capacity of future leaders to ensure continual change (Fullan, 2023). Although it is important that each school-based leader is guided by the mission and values of the district, allowing for a consistent approach in HFSD's schools, there is a broad range of needs in each community. Principals require the ability to make decisions that will positively impact the staff and students at their school based on the needs of the student demographic and community,

including examining and addressing oppressive structures (Lopez & Jean-Marie, 2021). A school principal can have a significant impact on many aspects of the school including the culture and climate, staffing, instructional practices, student discipline, school goals, and school structure (Coelli & Green, 2012; Hallinger & Heck, 1998; Leithwood & Jantzi, 1999; Memela & Ramrathan, 2022). Effective leadership can help identify necessary change in schools and, more importantly, ensure a culture and climate of social justice that champions students who have been historically marginalized in schools, thus increasing student belongingness (Theoharis & O'Toole, 2011). My experiences have not only shaped my positionality, but also my ways of knowing. Thus, what follows is an exploration of epistemology and ways of knowing in relation to this OIP.

Epistemology and Ways of Knowing

I attribute my beliefs and understanding of the world to my upbringing and endeavour to understand multiple ways of learning and knowing. I am a Canadian-born female educated in a Western school system built for settlers and their descendants (Tuck & Yang, 2012). Schooling in Canada, where I was educated, is based on a white, male, capitalist, Christian hierarchy (Khalifa et al., 2021; Torrance et al., 2021). For ten years of my childhood, my family lived in Canadian Indigenous communities, and I have spent over 20 years of my career in education working in urban schools with diverse student demographics. I attribute my worldview to these experiences and hope to challenge an education system that, in my experience, has not met the needs of all students. Capper (2019) asked how it is relevant to study epistemological theories written decades ago to advance equitable educational leadership and argued that studying past theories and practices allows a social justice leader to creatively develop socially just educational settings. It is relevant to study past theories to move beyond them. Such theories were focused

on emancipation and are the basis for the lens through which this OIP will be viewed (Theoharis, 2018). As an educational leader, I believe a nuanced grasp of diverse ways of knowing will empower me to create a learning environment that honours the multifaceted pathways through which students will acquire and interpret knowledge. The work in this OIP will be underpinned by critical theory and viewed through an ethical leadership lens. Ethical leadership is necessary to increase the chances of social and scholastic success of all students (Erich et al., 2015).

According to Capper (2019), educators who base their work in critical theory give voice to the voiceless, are concerned with oppression, value social justice, and believe that change for the better is attainable. Ledesma and Calderon (2015) assert that CRT can be used as an epistemological tool to analyze the experiences of historically marginalized students. In the context of this OIP, change for the better includes more equitable, inclusive, liberating, and emancipatory schooling (Liu, 2017). I believe the current reality in education is that the structure of schooling is oppressive to marginalized students, but that reconstruction can occur by addressing inequities, increasing culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP), and counteracting dominant narratives. Addressing bias by integrating diverse epistemological perspectives can support me, as a social justice leader, to address inclusivity and equity in my school (Torrance et al., 2021). What follows is a description of the context in which my school is situated.

Organizational Context

St. Kizito school serves 300 students in kindergarten through Grade 6. It is part of the HFSD, the second-largest Catholic school district in the province serving 50 000 to 60 000 students. Many students at St. Kizito school are economically and socially disadvantaged. According to city census data, the median income in the neighbourhood is $34 000, or 54% of the city average (Community Profiles, 2016). Using formal reading assessments, it has been

determined that only 42% of students read at or above grade level. To address this achievement gap, school leaders must not only be concerned with current pedagogical practices which improve equitable access to education, but they must also alter the oppressive structure of education which has historically marginalized racialized students (Lopez & Jean-Marie, 2021; Torrance et al., 2021). By focusing on culturally responsive instructional practices, and considering potentially limiting structures that impact current student performance, teachers can increase students' feelings of belongingness and increase the likelihood of successful student achievement (Gay, 2015; Khalifa et al., 2016).

Provincial Context

The provincial government of Alberta is responsible for curriculum development, funding school boards, and overseeing education policy. The current government of Alberta claims to be taking action on racism and promoting an inclusive society and, thus, has created an anti-racism advisory council (Government of Alberta, 2022.) The province's inclusive education policy asserts that all school authorities must ensure all students have meaningful learning experiences regardless of race, religion, gender, and other factors (Government of Alberta, 2022a). This would lead one to be optimistic that future curricular changes will include anti-racism and racial justice outcomes. Yet, if these topics are excluded from government-designed learning outcomes, teachers will need to find ways to address such topics and use pedagogical strategies that promote equity and belongingness. Educators hold significant responsibility in encouraging a sense of belonging among students. Teachers must use strategies that promote understanding, empathy, and a positive classroom atmosphere that values diversity, celebrates differences, and ensures equal opportunities for students to succeed academically, socially, and emotionally on top of the educational objectives set by government authorities.

School District

The HFSD is a large, Catholic school district serving students in one of Alberta's urban centres. The district is organized hierarchically, and it is overseen by a board of trustees. The board, which governs the district, is composed of elected members who serve their constituents by advocating for students' needs and promoting and preserving Catholic education. The board must also meet the mandates of the provincial government and work closely with the Minister of Education. The district is led by a chief superintendent and senior administrators including other superintendents, area directors, and supervisors. As a school district, there are protocols and procedures that each school must adhere to and there are district-wide professional growth (PG) initiatives that support all district staff in current pedagogical practices and address social change. This commitment speaks to the culture of HFSD; senior administration believes in the importance of district staff approaching their work in a manner that defines HFSD. They work to ensure there are shared beliefs and values and that everyone works together to create an environment promoting student growth, development, and success. The HFSD's mission is to support its students in achieving their full potential in a faith-based environment (HFSD, 2020b). Indeed, at the HFSD educating and empowering students is done through a Catholic lens.

School Context

As the principal of St. Kizito school, I am responsible for over 300 students and 28 staff members including an assistant principal, 16 teachers, six education assistants, one learning commons librarian, two office staff, one school support worker, and two caretakers. Through staff-wide discussions at meetings and informal one-on-one conversations, I have learned that many of the staff at St. Kizito school believe the school is a place of belonging; however, it may not be that for everyone.

A school plan is created annually by the principal, with input from stakeholders, by using data from student, staff, and parent surveys and results from provincial achievement tests. It is in this school plan that the administrative team at St. Kizito school can include goals to increase belonging and achievement to support a vision for equity and inclusion. Enrolment data show that 55% of St. Kizito school students are English language learners and in a recent school survey, 80% of students identified as Black, Indigenous, or people of colour (HFSD, 2022a). In this survey students voiced their concerns regarding belonging and self-esteem.

The survey results showed that 67% of students believed other students will not feel they are good enough; 35% of students do not feel good about themselves; 19% of students believe that members of the school community do not care about one another; and just under 20% of students believe they have been treated unfairly because of their race or culture (HFSD, 2022a). Research shows that 21% of students do not believe there is an adult at their school who cares about them (HFSD, 2021). Moreover, 61% of students reported feeling anxiety, which is counterproductive since a lack of belongingness is directly related to increased anxiety (Allen et al., 2018; Goodenow & Grady, 1993; HFSD, 2021). This lack of belongingness and elevated anxiety can contribute to lower academic success particularly for racialized students (Gray et al., 2018).

These survey data and low achievement rates for some students create a sense of urgency for organizational change. School staff recognize this urgency and have expressed their desire to connect with students. The survey results are the crucial data that stand out to me as an educational leader. This is the gap I want to address in this OIP; the outcome will be a better sense of belongingness for students, which will help fuel better academic achievement. A closer look at the gap is outlined in the problem of practice (PoP) that follows.

Problem of Practice

A challenge in elementary schools in Alberta's urban centres is the students' perceived lack of belongingness, which in some cases, is because of their race, culture, or socioeconomic status (Gay, 2015; Lopez & Jean-Marie, 2021; United Way, 2022). Research shows that student belonging is linked to their motivation to achieve and affects academic success (Allen et al., 2018; Goodenow, 1993; Gray et al., 2018; Montoro et al., 2021). Immediate impacts of a student's feelings of exclusion include a lack of academic success and emotional and social problems within the school setting. Long-term effects include quitting school, harmful social and psychological impacts, and difficulty functioning in the work environment (Allen et al., 2018; Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Baumeister & Robson, 2021; Murphy & Zirkel, 2015). Evidence shows that connecting historically marginalized students to school and fostering a culture of belonging can increase academic success, physical and emotional well-being, and a positive outlook toward school (Gay, 2021; Goodenow & Grady, 1993). It can also reduce absenteeism, behavior issues, misconduct, and anxiety (Allen et al., 2018). Since there is a clear correlation between students' perceptions of belonging and their academic success, feeling like they belong should be considered a prerequisite to student success. If teachers struggle to apply key pedagogical approaches and instructional practices (e.g., CRP), it is difficult to address the complicated challenges that diverse student bodies present. This situation may also contribute to a lack of social and scholastic success and belongingness (Marshall & Khalifa, 2018). Thus, feelings of emotional safety and physical well-being are vital for students. The question at the heart of this PoP is how to best foster student belonging, success, and a positive climate and culture by promoting equity in schools while also addressing teachers' capacities for improved instructional practice. Also, administrative teams, like the one at St. Kizito school, needs to

foster a culture of belongingness and celebrate the richly diverse student population. This culture can have a powerful effect on student learning and indicate a context where learning is tailored to meet and engage students with diverse experiences and cultures in the classroom. School leaders must also support teacher growth to better serve marginalized students and address the gap that some students are at risk of failure (Ladson-Billings, 2021; Torrance et al., 2021).

Framing the Problem of Practice

At the heart of the gap presented in this OIP is a PoP that leadership can improve. To situate the PoP in a broader context, this section frames it by describing contextual forces that shape it. Notably, framing the PoP through its impact on student social and scholastic success and teacher practice reinforces the need for change.

Impact on Student Success

As suggested by the PoP, some students are at risk of failure because of a lack of belongingness and some teachers lack the capacity to increase this sense of belonging among students. Racialized students may be at increased risk, a disparity that is perpetuated by the fact that racially and culturally student bodies are underrepresented in the curriculum and are often viewed as being less capable or lacking the capacity to learn (Lopez & Jean-Marie, 2021; Marshall & Khalifa, 2018). Students should experience equity at school, namely a school ecosystem that centres belongingness through school culture, pedagogical practices, and support for diverse learners. Thus, the next subsection delves into belongingness.

Belongingness

Belonging is a fundamental purview of schools and a factor which can be influenced by school leadership. According to Allen et al. (2021), “most people have a deep need to feel a

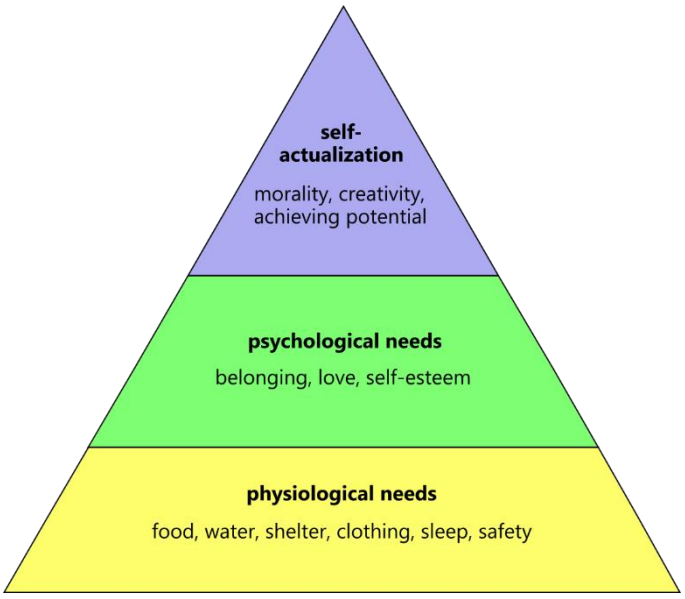
sense of belonging, characterized as a positive but often fluid and ephemeral connection with other people, places, and/or experiences" (p. 88). Over 60 years ago Maslow (1962), described belongingness as a basic need that must be fulfilled before one can achieve higher needs, such as self-actualization (Figure 1). Maslow also said that this basic need must be fulfilled through relationships with others (Maslow, 1962). Many theorists who have built on Maslow's work, have evolved theories of motivation, and agree that Maslow's initial thought—that people are motivated by the need to be loved and accepted by others—still holds (Allen et al., 2018; Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Goodenow, 1993a). As individuals move through the hierarchy, their needs change and their ability to develop and grow increases. Students must feel they belong before they can accomplish tasks like learning. In Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Figure 1), "belonging" is a middle term between a student's basic needs (physiological needs and safety needs) and self-actualization or those things that are primordially educative, accomplishing (esteem) and actualizing (reaching one's true potential). Belonging is a psychological need, which when met, can support a student to feel competent, which in turn allows them to achieve success. People must satisfy their basic physiological needs before attempting to meet their psychological needs and achieve their potential to reach the highest level of self-actualization (Maslow, 1962). In other words, belongingness is a catalyst for personal and social development. A sense of belongingness can help support students to move from the middle of the hierarchy to the self-actualization stage.

Baumeister and Leary (1995) asserted that belonging is the human desire to form positive and significant relationships. They also wrote that these relationships must involve frequent interactions and the people must have genuine affection for each other. The teacher-student relationship is an ideal scenario to increase students' motivation through increased belonging as

teachers build meaningful, positive, lasting connections with students. Baumeister and Robson (2021) argued that the need to belong is very important in school-aged children. With the evolution of social interactions and the changing makeup of school demographics, those who lack such interpersonal connections are at risk of multiple and diverse problems. Allen et al. (2018), described school belonging as bonding, connectedness, engagement, and community; emphasizing the importance of students bonding and connecting with teachers, the importance of their relationships with peers, and how strongly they feel connected to school. A strong sense of belonging in school can lead to increased motivation, academic success, happiness, self-efficacy, and positive self-esteem (Allen et al. 2018). For teachers to support students in meeting this need to belong, they must create a psychologically safe space for learning that allows students to be themselves and take risks and encourages them to contribute (Hardie et al., 2022).

Figure 1

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



Note. Adapted from *A theory of human motivation*, Maslow, A. H. (1943).

Research shows school belonging among diverse racial and cultural groups is crucial to students' success (Goodenow & Grady, 1993; Khalifa, 2021; Murphy & Zirkel, 2015). For students to have a strong sense of belonging, they need to believe they are accepted and appreciated and they need to be reflected in the learning (Baumeister & Robson, 2021). Students who are diverse may not be accepted or reflected in the school structure and narrative in a way that is motivating and this affects their achievement (Khalifa, 2021). Students who see themselves in the structures of the school have a greater chance of success. For example, seeing themselves in the curricular materials would support students in feeling part of the school community. Marginalized students can be vulnerable to feelings of being devalued, which in turn may cause anxiety—hindering academic performance (Murphy & Zirkel, 2015; Wiggan, 2007). Ideally, belongingness should allow students to feel personally accepted and valued regardless of race or culture (Goodenow & Grady, 1993).

To address school belongingness at St. Kizito school, it is imperative to promote a welcoming, supportive, encouraging, and motivating environment for all. Increasing the sense of belongingness felt by students, or the way students feel accepted, respected, and supported, can improve the rate of academic success and increase students' self-esteem, positive mental well-being, and motivation (Goodenow, 1993b; Gray et al., 2018). It is hoped that St. Kizito school leadership can build student agency and construct a socially just school for all. Teachers can remove barriers to success and increase student motivation by increasing their connection to school (Wegmann, 2017). Moreover, relationships with peers and school staff contribute to students' connection to their school. To improve equitable outcomes in education, school leaders must work toward increasing a sense of belonging for all, as there is a clear relationship between belongingness, student achievement, and well-being. Because teachers can have a profound

impact on how connected students feel to schools, the next subsection focuses on teacher practice.

Teacher Practice

Some teachers are not yet attuned to practices that lead to cultural proficiency, which can negatively impact student success, particularly for racialized students. School leaders can build the capacity of staff and help them gain the tools they need to improve academic success among marginalized students (Khalifa, 2021). For school leadership to ensure success, leaders must support teachers in building their agency. Teacher self-efficacy and teacher collective-efficacy will be key to this OIP's success.

Self-efficacy

In discussions with teachers at St. Kizito school, I have learned that they have historically relied on their self-efficacy to manage the classroom and enact instructional practices. According to Bandura (2012), self-efficacy is how people motivate themselves, set goals, and develop and change. Teacher self-efficacy can be described as self-confidence and the ability to execute strategies that will positively influence student learning outcomes. A teacher's sense of confidence and competence in the classroom directly influences how positively students perceive their learning environment and can result in increased motivation and achievement (Lauermann & Berger, 2021). Teachers' instructional practice can have a profound impact on student achievement. The resources teachers choose to use and the strategies they incorporate in the classroom are powerful tools for improving student performance. According to Cummins et al. (2015), instructional practices, such as scaffolding meaning, developing background knowledge, and expanding academic language are effective in supporting student academic achievement. The choices that teachers make can help students increase content knowledge, promote the

development of relevant cognitive skills, and develop strong learning habits. When teachers possess a strong sense of efficacy, they can foster a stronger sense of engagement and motivate students to take ownership of their learning (Cummins et al., 2015).

Collective Efficacy

Teacher collective efficacy can have a significant impact on student learning. According to Donohoo (2017), "Collective teacher efficacy (CTE) refers to the perceptions and judgments of a group of educators regarding their ability to positively influence student outcomes" (p. 102). This shared belief in a group's capability to mobilize its collective resources to achieve goals can benefit the teachers of St. Kizito school in their endeavour to improve student access to equitable and quality educational opportunities. Bandura found a strong correlation between student achievement and collective efficacy in 1993, and educational researchers have corroborated this over the last 30 years (Donohoo, 2017). Collective efficacy is strongly associated with teachers' commitment to achieving goals, sense of responsibility, and willingness to collaborate with others. Teachers working collectively can form strong academic communities that foster high-quality instruction, professional development, and student achievement. Ultimately, this collective allows teachers to become more effective in providing tailored, meaningful learning experiences for every student. Currently, the extent of a collective goal among staff at St. Kizito school is the school plan. Developed annually to determine school goals, this plan supports staff in working together, but there is no other built-in procedure that requires staff to achieve these goals collectively. By understanding teachers' self- and collective efficacy, we can dig into how the situation can be improved for St. Kizito school students. More specifically, the next section presents questions to guide the work in this OIP.

Guiding Questions Emerging from the Problem of Practice

Through an analysis of the PoP, questions arise about equity, the purpose and function of schools, and how to address the needs of the changing student demographics. Below are three questions that will guide this OIP. If we consider how to deconstruct, reconstruct, and construct according to Ladson-Billings (1998), we can identify what is broken in the system and determine what I, as the school leader, can do to effect change.

1. As the school principal, how can I support teachers to improve their agency? Agency is "the capacity of people to act upon their ideas and plans to transform current thinking or practice" (Damsa, 2021, p. 2). To improve teacher agency, the administrative team must support teachers in growing their confidence and competence in their own teaching methods, curriculum decisions, and classroom dynamics and management. How teachers interact with students impacts how they learn; therefore, it is important that teachers develop shared values and beliefs about the abilities of all students (Gay, 2018; Khalifa, 2021).
2. How will I determine multiple entry points for teachers for this type of growth? Teachers will be at different career stages and have diverse backgrounds, experiences, and knowledge. It will be important to determine how to best move teachers along a spectrum with different starting points. With teachers choosing their own professional learning topics and learning methods, teacher growth is somewhat unpredictable. To move teachers along a collective continuum, intentional analysis and planning will be necessary and will turn opportunity and purpose into possibilities (Taylor, 2023).
3. How can I help teachers recognize individual student needs? The current narrative in schools is about one size fits all and does not promote personalization. We must

reconstruct the agency of teachers who need to take responsibility for students and their individual learning needs and styles. Doing so will positively impact students, increasing their success. The school staff is responsible for providing the optimum learning environment for students and it is my responsibility to help teachers facilitate such an educational setting (Hammond, 2015).

Leadership-Focused Vision for Change

To meet the needs of students in a continually changing world, there is much pressure on schools and their staff to be adaptable (Beycioglu & Kondakci, 2021). To successfully implement change, it is essential to have a vision clearly outlining what needs to change and why. A leader must have an inspiring vision and clearly articulate that vision (Kotter, 2012). This section presents the gap between the current state in which the PoP is situated and the proposed goal state.

The Gap Between the Present and Proposed Future State

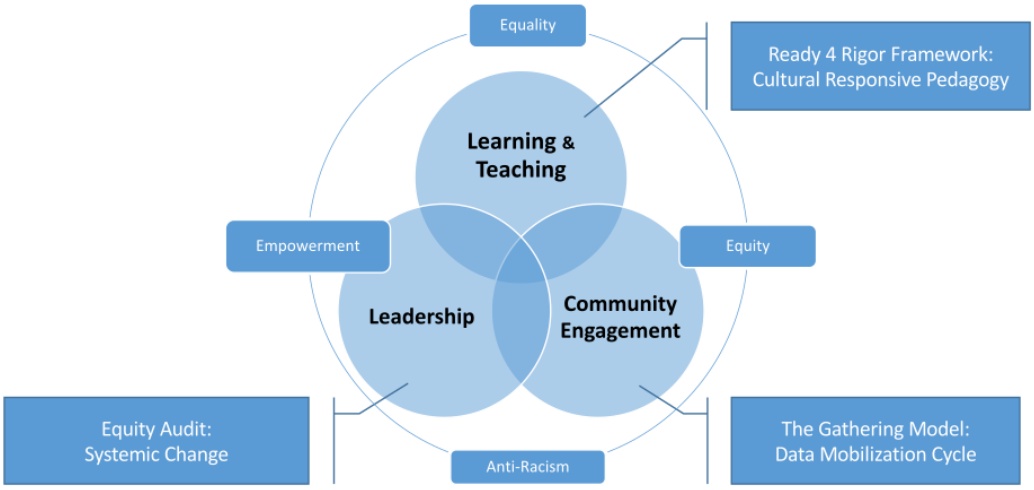
The vision for change—increasing academic success by increasing racially and culturally diverse students' feelings of belonging—is driven by a particular gap in education. Racialized students have historically been less successful than their white counterparts. Black, Indigenous, and other minoritized and racialized students achieve lower results academically, feel less connected to school, and are at a higher risk of developing mental health issues such as anxiety and depression (Gray et al., 2018; Hammond, 2015; Khalifa, 2021). The PoP is systemic, as racially and culturally marginalized students suffer oppression from systemic racism. However, this problem can also be considered within the principal's scope of influence because school leadership can help create a positive learning environment (Rodriguez et al., 2022). As the principal at St. Kizito school, I can endeavour to implement effective change. For this plan to

come to fruition, I must work with all stakeholders at a pace that will ensure sustainable improvement. Elements of the organization that will need to change include staff readiness and district-level support.

District-level efforts, such as the equity framework (Figure 2) and the Racial Justice Committee, will support me in implementing effective change. The HFSD's equity framework, depicted in Figure 2, is a district plan built on a pedagogy of anti-racism to support system-wide equity improvements (HFSD, 2023). There should be alignment among school district policies, organizational culture, and best practices at the school level to meet the diverse needs of all students. District-driven equitable practices prioritize student equity and allow leaders to implement such goals and instructional practices effectively (Marshall & Khalifa, 2018).

Figure 2

The Equity Framework



Note. Adapted From Equity Framework. HFSD. URL removed.

Cultural Responsiveness

Enacting CRP involves using a student's background, experiences, and knowledge to improve instructional practices and teach students more effectively (Gay, 2002). Culturally responsive instruction can be implemented by socially conscious teachers who believe that all students have academic potential, believe themselves to be responsible for meeting students' needs, can construct lessons to meet these needs, know their students' backgrounds and experiences, and use this knowledge to foster student success (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). According to Gay, (2021), culturally responsive teaching not only improves academic success, but also increases ethnic pride and improves the emotional well-being of students. This important pedagogical practice has the potential to make great improvements in education by addressing the needs of those who have often been overlooked or left out when considering educational reform.

A school leader does not need to know everything about every culture, but rather what they require is a willingness to learn more about students' backgrounds, experiences, and beliefs to meet their academic and social needs appropriately (Khalifa et al., 2016). Cultural proficiency requires the school leader to acknowledge and respond to student differences and foster an environment where differences are celebrated and viewed as strengths (Khalifa et al., 2016; Lindsey et al., 1999). A culturally responsive school leader can build the capacity of teachers to improve their instructional practices and shift their beliefs about students' capabilities ensuring teachers believe all students are capable of learning. School leaders must encourage teachers to evolve their pedagogical practices through professional learning. Leaders must encourage teachers to see students as capable of success, including those historically seen as less able (Gay, 2002; Marshall & Khalifa, 2018). A school principal must also foster a culture where all students

are valued, and that is culturally responsive and can improve students' sense of belonging and connection to school.

School Culture

Hoy and Sabo (1998) define school culture as how the students and staff interact and their values and beliefs. Since school principals can significantly impact school culture, they can also profoundly impact students. They can also influence student behavior through modeling, relationship building, and restorative discipline practices (Coelli & Green, 2012). A principal's influence on students is sometimes related to a student's feelings of belongingness. Racialized students often encounter a school culture and climate in which their identities and experiences are inadequately reflected (Khalifa, 2021). This lack of representation can lead to disconnection as students struggle to find a reflection of their cultural histories and perspectives within the overall school culture. Students need a genuine opportunity to feel a sense of belonging. Gaps in cultural inclusivity and representation can hinder such opportunities. This gap between students' identities and the school environment underscore the urgency to foster a more inclusive and culturally responsive setting that values all students.

According to Schipper et al. (2020), "school cultures can be described in terms of the ethos and social environment in schools, consisting of the administrative and organizational structures and how these interact in order to promote (or constrain) teacher professional learning" (pp. 113-114). School cultures that promote and enhance teacher learning, individually and collectively, support teachers in building their agency by developing new knowledge regularly and over time (Schipper et al., 2020). This shared system of beliefs, values, and desire for PG must complement CRT to create a climate where all students can feel connected to the school and learn successfully. Framing this OIP using CRT allows one to question the school's

role and practices (Benveniste et al., 2019). When used strategically, CRT can promote a positive racial climate, create equitable opportunities for all students, and challenge traditional ideologies about race and racism (Capper, 2019, Ladson-Billings, 1998). The structure of the school, including the school culture and staff's collective efficacy, can be enhanced to bolster the agency of teachers and students to enact a socially just reconstruction of school practices, instruction, structure, and beliefs.

Many factors may influence the context in which students learn. However, three of those factors are especially impactful when considering this PoP; school culture, students' sense of belongingness, and the school staff's ability to be responsive to student cultures. Appendix A represents this relationship; school climate is a conflation of school culture, cultural inclusivity, and belonging. The circular aspect of the figure represents equity and belonging. These three factors are interdependent and, when engaged with CRT, can be key in addressing the gap presented in this OIP. Considering the interactions among these factors, school leadership must consider how they can create a vision for change that is effective and sustainable and engages staff in a process that shifts their practice and supports student achievement.

Chapter Summary

This first chapter delved into the context of St. Kizito school and the distinctive challenges evident within classrooms characterized by racial and cultural diversity. Through a deep exploration, the chapter highlighted the leadership PoP, which serves as the foundation for this research. An examination of the school's culture and climate, student belongingness, and the implementation of culturally responsive education enriched the exploration of the PoP. Framed by guiding questions, the chapter investigated the factors that contribute to the PoP, shedding

light on the current gap and the challenge in fostering an inclusive and equitable educational environment.

The next chapter includes an exploration of leadership styles for driving change. A framework designed to navigate the landscape of change within an educational setting is also presented. Delving into change theory, chapter two presents a foundation for the practical application of insights that can shape change within St. Kizito school.

Chapter 2: Planning and Development

In this chapter the focus shifts to my distinctive leadership approach to change, which is composed of authentic leadership and culturally responsive school leadership (CRSL). This combination forms my approach, underscoring my belief that a leader's authenticity and a deep understanding of the school culture can have a profound influence on the proposed organizational changes. At the heart of the chapter is a strategic framework which will be used to propel this work forward. Deszca et al.'s (2020) Change Path Model (CPM) is the chosen framework tailored for organizational change. Moreover, the organization's readiness for change will be assessed. Three potential solutions to the PoP will be identified and analyzed. The solutions are compared to determine the best path forward to align with the overarching vision. The following subsection describes my leadership approach to change, including authentic leadership theory and CRSL.

Leadership Approach to Change

My leadership approach to change involves a combination of two leadership theories that, together, form the framework supporting the present study. Authentic leadership allows me to manage resources and operations based on my strengths and experiences while garnering the staff's enthusiasm and motivation through my passion and personal values. Applying CRSL helps me to foster a school environment that addresses barriers to success for students of racially and culturally diverse backgrounds. These two leadership approaches will complement each other, allowing me to support teachers better in becoming more effective, culturally responsive educators who promote success by fostering a culture of belongingness.

Authentic Leadership

One leadership theory that guides my practice is authentic leadership. According to Begley (2006), "authentic leadership is a metaphor for professionally effective, ethically sound, and consciously reflective practices in educational administration" (p. 570). Leadership can be considered more than simply management, but rather as actions, processes, and procedures extending beyond inspiring others. Authentic leaders are genuine, hopeful, confident, and visionary (Begley, 2006; Avolio & Gardner, 2005). Authentic leaders are also self-aware, knowing their strengths and weaknesses and how they can impact others. They also clearly understand who they are, including their core values and beliefs (Northouse, 2019). Authentic leaders foster loyalty and respect by saying what they believe and acting on what they espouse. Decision-making may be situational, but staff and students can expect an authentic leader to be consistent in their beliefs and values and to always act in students' best interests (Duignan, 2014).

Authentic leadership can be intrapersonal and interpersonal, and both inward and outward looking (Northouse, 2019). A school leader (i.e., a principal) can weave their knowledge of self into their interactions with staff to lead genuinely. As they collaborate with staff, the leader can motivate them to be positive, encouraging, collaborative educators who promote student belongingness. Ultimately, authentic leaders can bring out the authenticity in others (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Cottrill et al., 2014). Authentic leadership is also contextual; the situation determines how one leads (Northouse, 2019).According to Duignan (2014), an authentic leader needs to be to be true to oneself and mediate their behaviours through their relationships with others. Leaders must maximize their relationships with others in the organization to create the most optimal environment (Duignan, 2020). As leaders weave knowledge of self with

relationships and interactions with staff, they will lead with authenticity (Gardner et al., 2021). As a school principal, using this type of leadership approach will allow me to collaborate with staff and motivate them to be positive, encouraging, and collaborative educators who promote student belongingness. At St. Kizito school, it is important to lead with integrity and honesty, appreciate the input of others, and share passions and beliefs while communicating clear and concise goals for the school community. This will help foster a culture of trust and collaboration where the quality of teaching and student learning can be enhanced (Stoll & Temperley, 2009).

Some argue that the most effective leaders are grand, aggressive, ambitious, and influential types, but research shows that genuine, passionate leaders can be more successful in creating atmospheres that allow an organization to flourish (Duignan, 2014). When aspiring to increase student belongingness, grand and aggressive may not be attributes that will best serve leaders. Rather, leaders must be compassionate, nurturing, and inclusive. Authentic leadership is a positive approach to leadership that builds followers' confidence and can garner commitment to the leader's vision (Gelaidan et al., 2023). Duignan (2014) argues that authenticity makes a leader influential and, thus, an authentic school principal can inspire all stakeholders to elevate their performance and expectations, especially students. This type of leadership acknowledges the needs of everyone in the organization and may be the most appropriate to support the diverse demographics of the students at St. Kizito school.

Authentic leadership, combined with culturally responsive leadership, can help principals of schools with culturally and racially diverse student populations. Authentic leaders seek to promote equitable guidelines and procedures and foster more effective relationships, respecting all students' values, beliefs, and cultural experiences (Duignan, 2014). Authenticity helps to support the growth of equity, diversity, and inclusion by encouraging dialogue and providing a

safe space for staff to be self-reflective (Cottrill et al., 2014). St. Kizito school staff and students would benefit from having a leader who combines both leadership approaches, fostering an environment where staff and students can feel a sense of belongingness and all can grow. An authentic leader can foster inclusivity, trust, and empowerment, creating a positive and supportive learning environment that fosters success (Greenier & Whitehead, 2016). "As authentic leaders have the ability to restore confidence, hope and optimism by relating to all stakeholders", (Kotze & Nel, 2017, p. 48), this leadership style is well-suited to be used with a CRT lens to address the issues in this PoP. The next subsection describes the theory of CRSL in the racially and ethnically diverse context of St. Kizito school.

Culturally Responsive School Leadership

Like authentic leadership, having CRSL is critical to creating a psychologically safe space for students in racially and culturally diverse educational contexts (Khalifa, 2021). This combination can create a double leadership loop, leading to well-being and success. According to Khalifa (2021), the theory of CRSL

> is characterized by a core set of unique leadership behaviors, namely: (a) being critically self-reflective; (b) developing and sustaining culturally responsive teachers and curricula; (c) promoting inclusive, anti-oppressive school contexts; and (d) engaging students' Indigenous (or local neighborhood) community contexts. (p. 13)

Cultural responsiveness is not simply a pedagogical practice that teachers must enact; it is a theory of practice, that, when embedded in school culture by school leaders, can have a significant, positive impact on the educational experience of racially and ethnically diverse students (Gay, 2021). Moreover, CRSL can lead to schools where teachers can effectively build relationships with historically marginalized students and support their academic success. This

result can be achieved by a leader who creates a safe, welcoming environment that celebrates all students' histories and cultural backgrounds. This type of leadership can influence teachers to embrace all students and to use student experiences and histories to develop instruction that will meet their needs. It also allows staff to recognize students' rich backgrounds and know that supporting their potential will help to propel their education forward rather than hold them back (Khalifa, 2021). For instance, if teachers believe students can achieve success, they are more likely to provide rigorous and engaging lessons. In turn, when students believe 1) themselves capable and 2) that their teachers are confident in their abilities, students are more likely to succeed (Gay, 2015). There are also multiple academic and social benefits of providing more inclusive environments for racialized students, including higher achievement rates and better overall health (Hunter et al., 2019).

Khalifa et al. (2016), assert that classroom instruction is essential for creating culturally responsive environments. However, teachers cannot effect lasting change on their own and must be supported by strong moral and inclusive leadership to address the challenges historically marginalized students face. According to Khalifa et al. (2016), CRSL has four strategic domains: critical self-reflection, culturally responsive curriculum and pedagogy, culturally responsive school context, and community engagement.

Critical self-reflection allows leaders to uncover any personal biases they may have so that they can continuously grow. A CRSL must recognize that they are influenced by their cultural identity and that their values, attitudes, and practices may not reflect the community in which they work (Furman, 2012). Secondly, community engagement is key to building a culturally responsive school environment because school leaders must understand and advocate for the needs of their community (Khalifa et al., 2016; Riehl, 2000). Thirdly, a culturally

responsive school context promotes inclusivity, and school leaders must ensure they develop inclusive practices and foster understanding and values (Riehl, 2000). Fourthly, culturally responsive curriculum and pedagogy can be developed in school-based professional development as it has not been widely instituted in teacher preparation programs (Gay, 2018). These four areas are interdependent. This makes it even more important that a school leader recognizes and challenges inequities that marginalize students. As principal of St. Kizito school, I must be self-reflective, involve parents and the larger community in school-based decision-making, and positively influence the school culture and the teachers' pedagogical practices.

Authentic school leadership and CRSL are complementary and can work together to help create an inclusive learning environment for students. Both types of leadership emphasize the importance of shared values and relationships and involve a personalized approach. This approach will also help build the teachers' capacities to personalize student learning and underpin my efforts to be a leader who promotes equity and social justice at my school. The following section explains the framework for leading the endeavour for social justice.

Framework for Leading the Change Process

This section describes the chosen theoretical framework I used to address the specific context of this OIP (St. Kizito school), followed by a description of the framework's limitations. Specifically, the following subsection describes the concept of organizational change using the CPM (Deszca et al, 2020).

Organizational Change

Expecting educators to change their teaching practices and strategies can be difficult, and asking them to shift their outlook, see the students differently, and change their expectations, can

be daunting. Fullan (2006) argued that changing organizational culture is difficult, which is perhaps why leaders do not often try to implement cultural shifts. While this change may be challenging, it is necessary to remove barriers to success for racialized students. Indeed, Fullan (2006) asserted that the key to effective change is motivation, which can be spurred by building new capacities. Capacity building in this OIP is framed by research on belongingness and the priorities and effectiveness of culturally responsive education to focus on equity and diversity for minoritized students. Change requires not only a reframing mindset, but also one of substantive action. Changing attitudes and awareness requires a shift in practice and thought. Values-driven behaviour can be developed through practice and can become part of one's muscle memory, enabling a person to change their perspective through action (Gentile, 2014).

Change Framework

To implement successful change, school leaders must be grounded in an effective theory of change. The CPM will be used to lead my school staff in increasing student belongingness (Deszca et al, 2020). A clear vision and plan that prioritizes change efforts will support this structured process. I chose this model as the best fit for this OIP for three reasons. Firstly, the model incorporates many previous and successful change frameworks, such as Lewin's stage theory of change and Kotter's stage model of organizational change (Deszca et al., 2020). Secondly, this model recognizes that change is an ongoing process that is not always linear. This model fits well with the endeavour of this OIP, as the path to fostering belongingness will not be linear (Deszca et al., 2020). Thirdly, the CPM aligns well with culturally responsive and authentic leadership approaches.

The CPM has four steps: awakening, mobilization, acceleration, and institutionalization (Deszca et al., 2020). The rising rates of change require organizations to be adaptable; the

changing demographic in urban schools requires school staff to adapt to meet the desired future state of belongingness. This change framework will be the structure needed to analyze and address existing conditions and subsequently transform them to create an enhanced educational environment of belongingness.

Awakening

The awakening stage of the CPM requires the change leader to analyze the organization to recognize internal and external forces that may cause the organization to require a shift (Deszca et al., 2020). Once the leader is aware of their current environment and circumstances, and recognizes the need to adapt and change, they can begin to develop a vision and strategies to respond to these challenges. The leader will need data from all parts of the organization, and they need to discuss this data with stakeholders to ensure everyone understands the current challenges and the need for change (Deszca et al., 2020). This stage can begin with an organizational analysis. This is the stage at which the St. Kizito school leadership team will raise teachers' consciousness about the issues marginalized students face. According to Gray et al. (2018), schools are hostile environments for racialized students because of institutional racism, stereotypes, and biases, and all stakeholders must be made aware of the need for change because of these factors. This awareness will prepare stakeholders for the next phase; mobilization.

Mobilization

During the mobilization phase, the change leader will further develop the action according to the needs determined by analyzing data and engaging in discussions with stakeholders. The organizational analysis will support this phase too. The leader must analyze the school's structures and processes, the cultural dynamics, and the beliefs and behaviour of all

stakeholders, including the change agent (the leader) and change recipients (followers) (Deszca et al., 2020). This phase focuses on building and sustaining momentum for change. No one person can articulate a vision, communicate it to all stakeholders, remove all barriers to success, generate short-term wins, and embed the change into the school's culture; change is much more effectively implemented when supported by organizational actors (Kotter, 2012). Successful change can be enhanced when change recipients participate in the change process (Armenakis & Harris, 2009). St. Kizito school has just such a coalition to support successful change. Indeed, a key group of teachers is driving a push for racial justice within the school and working to build the capacity of the school staff.

Not only is motivation important during mobilization, but also, effective communication of the vision is critical during mobilization. An authentic leader can communicate the vision to the group by sharing their passion. It is equally vital for the leader to emotionally regulate the stakeholders along the way, as they will know that change is difficult for those who are complacent with the status quo (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). It will be important to connect with stakeholders and ensure their buy-in before moving to the next phase of acceleration, to which we now turn.

Acceleration

The acceleration phase of the CPM involves action planning and implementation; the change leader must manage the plan, build momentum, and manage the transition for all organizational actors (Deszca et al., 2020). This is the phase in which staff and students will be empowered. In particular, teachers will implement pedagogical practices that allow learning to become more personalized so marginalized students are served well. Creating an environment that allows teachers to be risk-takers as they learn and implement new classroom strategies is

important. Teachers must be learning partners who model risk-taking, innovation, perseverance, and resilience (Howard et al., 2018). As the school principal, I must support staff in developing their skills and celebrate small wins along the way. Not only will staff need to be empowered with knowledge and skills, but they will also need to believe in the students' capabilities to implement the changes proposed in this OIP (Gay, 2018). A cultural shift in teachers' beliefs and attitudes toward students and their abilities will require evolving the culture and climate of the entire school staff. Using authentic and CRSL styles will allow me to manage teacher behaviour and attitudes better, as it is often the leader's behaviour that supports teachers in achieving group objectives (Hoque & Raya, 2023).

Stakeholders may lose excitement or become non-believers if the desired state is not attainable in the short-term. However, if the school leader celebrates gains along the way, it can increase motivation and keep the school staff on track to achieve a visionary state (Gilley et al., 2009). All of the change that the leader and followers achieve during the first three phases must be institutionalized to achieve long-term change. Thus, the next subsection describes that phase of the change process.

Institutionalization

This phase involves embedding the change into the school's culture. As teachers and school administrators in the HFSD may move from school to school, it is important to anchor the change in the school's culture. This will be achieved by tracking and measuring progress along the way and developing new structures and processes as needed (Deszca et al., 2020). Change takes time so it is important for the St. Kizito school principal to persevere. If improvement occurs, it must be celebrated and used as encouragement to continue the process. To reach the goal state, it will be important to monitor whether the school staff are continually motivated to

reach it. Leaders must have a long-term approach to change using short-term wins to motivate staff and maintain a sense of urgency and institutionalize the change (Gilley, 2009; Kotter, 2012).

Notably, one danger to institutionalizing the change is that the administrative team at St. Kizito school changes, so it is imperative to anchor culturally responsive pedagogical practices and embed belongingness in the school culture. Culture includes the shared values and behaviour of a group, so if the St. Kizito school culture is a safe, welcoming, and culturally responsive environment, students should be able to learn regardless of who the principal is (Carpenter, 2014). Along the process of organizational change, first- and second-order changes must be considered. The next subsection defines these types of changes and explains how to achieve them in the context of this OIP.

First- and Second-Order Change

To reach this OIP's envisioned goal state, various first- and second-order changes will be necessary. Specifically, "first-order changes are incremental modifications that make sense within an established framework or method of operation. Second-order changes are modifications in the frameworks themselves" (Bartunek & Moch, 1987, p. 484). Changing behaviours and pedagogical approaches is second-order change as it is a break from past practice and requires the teachers to acquire new knowledge and skills (Marzano et al., 2005). To achieve second-order change, the change leader must begin by making first-order changes for better chances of success (Zsebik, 2008). Teachers' behaviour will be modified, which requires looking at the system, values, beliefs, and processes that shape teaching approaches and strategies. First-order steps which are taken to achieve culturally responsive change in a school environment, may include professional development opportunities, asking teachers to reflect on

their personal biases, supporting cultural knowledge, and considering available resources. Following these steps will support the second-order aspirations of this OIP. While the ability to overlap these phases in the CPM is considered a benefit to the needs in this OIP, it can also be a limitation. Therefore, the following subsection describes the framework's limitations.

Limitations of the Change Path Model

Not having a linear, structured change process with defined start and end points will mean that the change agents must develop a specific timeline to set clear and realistic goals. For this reason, such a timeline will be presented in the change implementation section of this OIP. The second limitation of the CPM is the lack of prescription. Not only is a timeline important, but it is also a clear path to success that must be defined. The phases of the CPM will support me, the change leader, to create a vision. However, I, in collaboration with the change team, must also develop a strategic plan to ensure all organizational actors are able to envision, work toward, and enjoy success. What follows is an examination the current readiness of the organization.

Organizational Change Readiness

In this section, the concept of change readiness will be explored. Understanding the rationale for change is vital for all stakeholders. Establishing a clear understanding of change at St. Kizito school is a prerequisite to comprehending both the components of change and the methods through which the change will be realized (Deszca et al., 2020). Transitioning from the current state to the desired state will involve more than a vision. There must also be a well-structured plan and process that requires understanding the motive behind the change. When readiness is cultivated, and the organizational actors embrace the vision and plan, resistance barriers will be lessened (Armenakis et al., 2000).

During this process, a skilled, trustworthy leader must monitor and address resistance. This leader must also be prepared to address unintended consequences and keep the plan in motion. The change leader's role is significant and crucial to the organization's readiness (Armenakis et al, 1993; Gilley et al., 2009). Three tools that will be used to assess readiness for change and organizational analysis are a SWOT analysis, the Nadler-Tushman Congruence Model of Organizational Behavior (1980), and a readiness rating questionnaire (Deszca et al, 2020).

Identifying Areas for Change

People want to feel represented and cared for; when students feel belonging, they are more likely to succeed (Gray et al., 2018). To move students through Maslow's hierarchy of needs, they must have their basic needs met first before belonging can be addressed (Maslow, 1962). Students at St. Kizito school have their physiological needs met to the best of the staff's ability. They are provided with food and drink through breakfast and lunch programs, and they are given clothing, when necessary, via charitable partnerships. Poor sleep has been addressed through tips in the weekly newsletter and student-centred presentations from a sleep consultant and evening sessions for parents.

The next step on Maslow's hierarchy of needs is psychological needs (Figure 1) (Maslow, 1962). It is necessary to meet these needs before students can move to the top of the hierarchy where they will be able to achieve academic success (Maslow, 1962). A lack of belonging can negatively impact academic success, but student motivation to achieve increases when students feel a sense of belonging connection to school (Allen et al., 2021; Carter et al., 2018). This deep need for people to connect with others includes the quality of the student-teacher relationship, emotional safety in the classroom, relationships with peers, and how

important a student feels they are in the school environment (Allen et al., 2021; Goodenow, 1993a). These areas must be addressed to facilitate the proposed change.

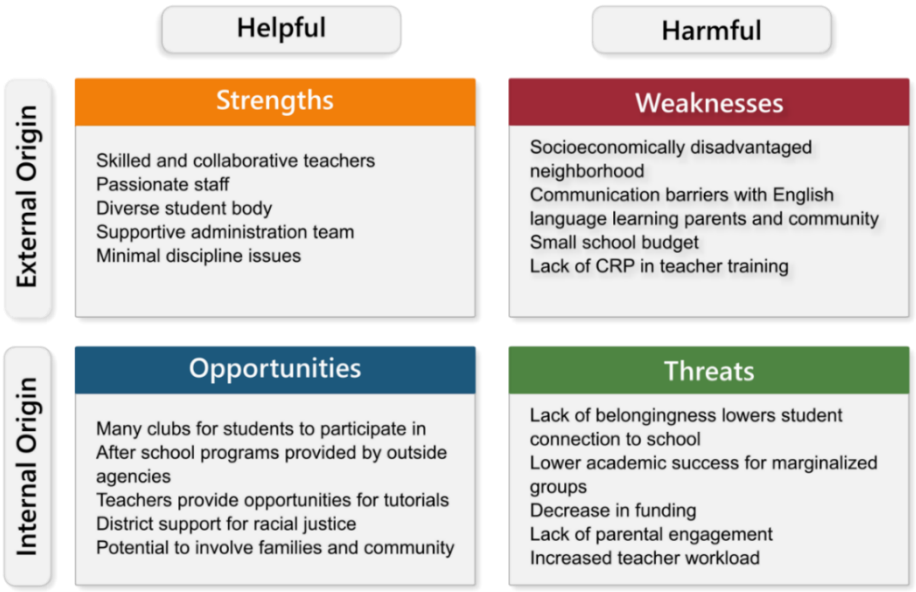
SWOT Analysis

To make an informed decision and assess the school's readiness to proceed with a change plan, the St. Kizito school leadership team performed a SWOT analysis. This analysis involved listing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats facing St. Kizito school (Minsky & Aron, 2021). These can be found in Figure 3. The SWOT analysis was produced in a brainstorming session with the St. Kizito school leadership team, and it categorizes factors relating to the proposed change in this OIP.

Traditionally, internal factors are listed first in a SWOT analysis. However, Minsky and Aron (2021) suggest considering external factors—opportunities and threats—first to allow the team to think more broadly when approaching the internal factors. Completing this analysis will help the change team discover their capabilities, opportunities, and potential issues. The analysis can be used to formulate strategies for success. The strengths and opportunities named in the St. Kizito school SWOT analysis portray an environment ready for change. The most important factor is the skills and openness of the school's teachers. Because the teachers are smart, dedicated, and open to change, they present a readiness for transformation. To use the SWOT and the CPM effectively, it is necessary to ensure organizational readiness. Thus, in the next subsection another tool is identified and that is a readiness questionnaire.

Figure 3

SWOT Analysis of St. Kizito School



Readiness Questionnaire

A second tool that will help assess St. Kizito school's readiness for change is a readiness questionnaire (Appendix B). Deszca et al. (2020) created a questionnaire based on Stewart's (1994) "Rate your readiness to change" scale. This questionnaire will gauge various dimensions of readiness and reveal potential challenges and areas that can be enhanced for readiness (Deszca et al., 2020). The 36 questions are divided into six categories: previous change experiences, executive support, credible leadership and change champions, openness to change, rewards for change, and measures for change and accountability (Deszca et al., 2020). Potential scores range from -25 to +50 and St. Kizito school scored a 31. By completing this questionnaire, strengths and gaps were identified that can impact the change plan and these can be addressed by the change leadership team. Strengths include the leadership team's readiness for change and gaps include teacher complacency. Readiness tools can support the change efforts and can be more

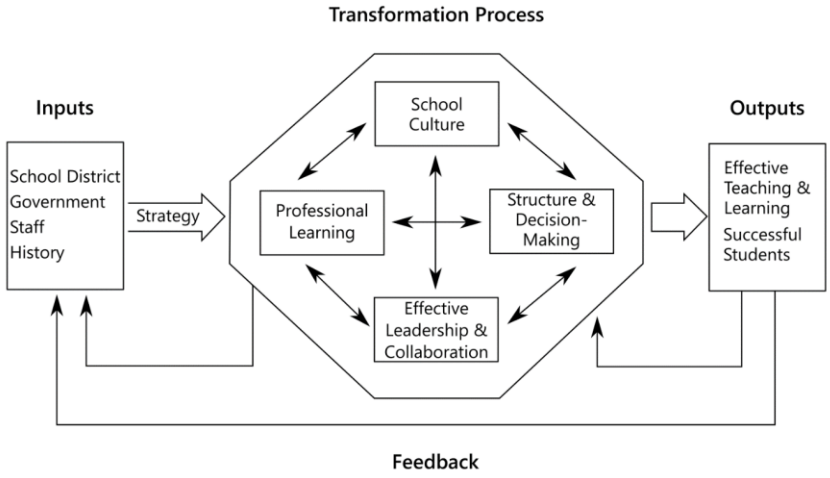
useful when combined with a thorough organizational analysis. Thus, in the next subsection, I describe the organization analysis used for the present study.

Organizational Analysis

I used Nadler & Tushman's Congruence Model of Organizational Behavior (1980) to help identify the needed changes at St. Kizito school. Schools are open systems; organizations in which each part is affected or influenced by the other parts (Burke, 2018). Nadler and Tushman's Congruence Model (1980) considers an organization's inputs, outputs, and transformation processes and is an example of an open systems model. According to the congruence model, inputs in an organization go through a transformation process to create outputs; each part or process at St. Kizito school is affected by another. The greatest emphasis of this process is on the transformation, in that each part of the organization is analyzed based on fit or congruence (Figure 4). The better the fit between parts, the more likely the organization will be successful.

Figure 4

Nadler-Tushman Congruence Model



Note. Adapted from *A Congruence Model for Organization Analysis*. Nadler & Tushman. (1980).

Considering the context of St. Kizito school and inputs such as the environment, resources, and history, several factors influence the school (Nadler & Tushman, 1980). The environment is shaped by but is not limited to the HFSD, its chief superintendent, and the board of trustees. Additionally, the provincial government is responsible for developing the curriculum and writing the provincial Education Act, while local colleges and universities offer teacher training programs (Province of Alberta, 2023). Furthermore, Canadian immigration policies play a role in "inputs."

The second type of input is resources, and the most important resource at St. Kizito school is the staff (Nadler & Tushman, 1980). According to Whelan-Berry and Somerville (2010), a vision for change and leadership is important, but successful change also takes place at the individual level. All staff within the school must work together to change the culture. When this occurs, all students will benefit from CRP and a school-wide culture of belongingness. A cultural shift is necessary to support equity and inclusion broadly at St. Kizito school.

Schools have been shaped by discriminatory practices that perpetuate inequalities based on race and ethnicity (Haynes, 2017; Ladson-Billings, 2006). This has led to systemic disadvantages for racialized students. Educational institutions cannot claim to provide students with an objective meritocracy because the curriculum, discipline policies, and teacher perspectives all favour white students, subordinating racialized students (Haynes, 2017; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). This reality highlights how urgent it is that the issues in this OIP are addressed. Recognizing and understanding the historical context of education is crucial to addressing school inequities. The urgency is to challenge biases, dismantle racist structures, and provide equal opportunities for all students (Ladson-Billings, 2021). School

administrators who possess authentic leadership and CRSL skills will be able to lead this change effectively.

Strategy is this model's fourth and perhaps most important input (Sabir, 2018). According to Nadler and Tushman (1980), strategy refers to knowing the organization's purpose, the tactics used to achieve its purpose, and the output objectives. The output objective, or core mission, of the HFSD is to educate and empower students (HFSD, 2022). This mission links the work in this PoP to the congruence model. Knowing the mission is to educate and empower, it is important to instill a sense of belonging in students to ensure there is fit among St. Kizito school's components to promote student success. The strategy to meet this challenge is currently not aligned with the goal outputs. An authentic leader who knows the purpose of the organization and has core beliefs aligned with the organization, will be able to align the goal outputs.

Nadler and Tushman (1980) define outputs as the products and performance of the institution and how effective they are. Increasing students' connection to school may increase the success of St. Kizito school's outputs. The intent is that school staff will work collaboratively to improve instructional practice, increase students' sense of belonging, and foster a culture of academic success. At the heart of the current inquiry is a concern as to how I, the principal, collaborating with the staff, can implement an effective plan of change that fosters a strong sense of belongingness that will contribute to increased student success.

Such a question can be answered by looking at the congruence model's transformation process. This process consists of tasks, individuals, formal organizational arrangements, and informal organization (Nadler & Tushman, 1980). According to Burke (2018), the better the fit, or congruence, between these organizational components, the more likely the organization will be successful. Burke (2018) argued that considerable work is required to analyze the components

and diagnose fit, but this is necessary to identify and address problems effectively. This step of the change framework may be most helpful in determining solutions to the PoP. Deszca et al. (2020) emphasized the importance of this transformation process and the need for a change agent to understand the organization's components, the components' congruence, and be able to help the organization's people recognize the need for change. A social justice leader who embodies authenticity is the type of change agent who can facilitate such recognition. The following subsection presents potential solutions to the proposed organizational change.

Solutions to Address the Problem of Practice

Improving the alignment between teachers' and students' needs, supporting school staff to accommodate evolving classroom demands, and effectively managing challenges stemming from increased racial and cultural diversity in the student population all require attention. Teachers can be reflexive, adaptable, and respond to challenging classroom dynamics. However, the absence of training and collective professional learning hampers teachers' consistency in addressing these challenges.

To increase student belonging through increased CRP, the leadership team at St. Kizito school must create an environment where teachers can adapt. One way to do this is for teachers to explore their biases. This knowledge will help teachers understand how their beliefs, values, and perspectives can influence their interactions with students, their lesson designs, and how they lead a classroom. Thus, school leaders can be essential in creating an environment for teachers to learn (Schipper et al., 2020). When exploring potential solutions to this OIP, it was necessary to analyze them through particular criteria: a solution should create an environment for teachers to build their capacity. And more importantly, to build it to specifically create a school

with classrooms that reflect greater inclusion and belongingness. The next subsection presents the first proposed solution.

Solution One: Professional Learning Community

To address the PoP in this OIP, I, the St. Kizito school principal, can institute a professional learning community (PLC), a formal network to increase collaboration and school improvement (Carpenter, 2014; DuFour, 2004; Owen, 2016). This network is achieved by establishing a common purpose and goal, fostering collaboration, and building trust and shared understanding among the staff (Carpenter, 2014). Effective, transformational school leaders ensure continuous improvement by guiding teachers collaboratively (Carpenter, 2014). Building teachers' capacity is crucial in improving school education and equity (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009). DuFour (2004) argued that school staff does not become a PLC simply by renaming itself, but rather it must work collaboratively and align its practices with PLC concepts. The first big idea of DuFour's PLCs is that all students can learn (DuFour, 2004). This is not to say that all students can be taught, but rather that they all can learn. This aligns well with CRP in that teachers are asked to evolve their beliefs about students' abilities (Gay, 2015). In a PLC, teachers will reflect on their beliefs and practices and work collaboratively to build a culture of academic success at St. Kizito school. DuFour's work is somewhat seminal in the PLC initiative within North American schools; however, to use the PLC process to increase equity, teachers must work collaboratively to focus on current best practices for instruction, like CRP. Fostering a collaborative and supportive learning environment can help teachers to share ideas and strategies to promote equity. Teachers must continually evolve to meet the needs of an ever-changing classroom demographic, including an increasingly culturally diverse student population (Carter Andrews & Richmond, 2019).

The second big idea in PLCs is that teachers will create a culture of collaboration (DuFour, 2004). This type of group effort is more than congeniality or the willingness to work together. Rather, PLCs engage in deep, professional learning to analyze their practice and support students with high levels of achievement (DuFour, 2004). Teachers also work together to remove barriers to student success. This aligns well with building a culture of belonging and implementing CRP to eliminate inequities in education. Research shows that teacher collaboration significantly increases student achievement (Hofman & Dijkstra, 2010). Collective teacher efficacy (CTE) refers to the idea that teachers, who share a common outlook and capacity, can positively affect student outcomes (Donohoo, 2017). By collectively building their capacity in CTE, St. Kizito school teachers can foster a collaborative, culturally responsive school environment.

The third aim of a PLC is that teachers will work together to produce results (DuFour, 2004). Teachers will not simply collaborate on lesson-planning, but rather they will work together to improve student achievement by creating specific common goals. By implementing these three big ideas into staff PG during PLC time at St. Kizito school, the academic and wellness needs of marginalized students may be addressed by centring teacher growth in areas of equity growth (Carter Andrews & Richmond, 2019).

PLC at St. Kizito School

To effectively implement a PLC at St. Kizito school, PLC time will be built into the school schedule and run by teacher leaders in collaboration with the principal. These teacher leaders will be part of the guiding coalition that will help garner enthusiasm among staff for the proposed changes (Kotter, 2012). During this time, teachers will work together to analyze and dig deep into school data results (e.g., summative assessments, provincial achievement test

results, and Our School Survey (OSS) data) to inform their instructional practices and set goals for the school community. Belonging to a community of practice can increase the teachers' sense of belonging and affirm their work (Rodriguez et al., 2022). Teachers will also use PLC time to explore their biases and be supported in implementing an instructional focus on equity and diversity for minoritized students. The PLC will become the place to deconstruct, reconstruct, and construct an improved inclusionary space (Ladson-Billings, 1998).

By creating a series of sessions, teachers will be immersed in pedagogical practices that will foster an inclusive environment where all students can feel a sense of belonging, connect to school, and be safe and welcome in the classroom to improve their academic performance. Being well-versed in CRP will allow teachers to support students in feeling part of the learning community in a school that offers a safe, respectful, and caring culture (Gay, 2015). Research shows that teachers can much more effectively collaborate to change the outcome for students when they are involved designing the process (Huijboom et al., 2019).

A positive school culture can emerge from a well-run PLC where teachers learn shared values and collective inquiry and focus on school improvement (Carpenter, 2014). This way, teachers can strive to create an equitable learning environment free from bias and value differences, ensuring that every student is respected and valued. Studies have shown that CTE predicts student achievement more than socioeconomic status (Donohoo, 2017). Building teacher capacity through targeted professional learning in a collaborative environment should benefit all students at St. Kizito school. The following subsection describes the required resources to implement a PLC at St. Kizito school.

Resources Required

The most important resource required to implement a PLC at St. Kizito school is time. Time will need to be built into the schedule to host a PLC; the principal and teacher leaders will need time to collaborate and plan the sessions, and teachers will use classroom time to practice and embed strategies learned. The school principal will need to be well-versed in the PLC process and the content to be presented to direct the teacher leaders properly. The principal and teacher leaders will require training in CRP to support staff in learning research-based best practices. The next subsection describes a second possible solution to address the PoP.

Solution Two: Individual Professional Growth

A second solution to the PoP is individual teacher PG. Teachers are all at different career stages and have various past experiences, situating them on a spectrum of culturally responsive educators. If teachers are to choose their own professional development path, they may participate in workshops and sessions of their choice throughout the year. Teachers could create their own PG plan and merge it with the HFSD's model. As the school principal, I could then support the plan, review its goals, and ensure alignment with the school's goals.

PG may be measured through a range of indicators such as the teacher's willingness to take on more responsibility, stay up-to-date with current best practices and research, connect with their students, and create meaningful learning experiences. Individual PG builds teacher agency, and self-directed learning allows a teacher to choose the direction of growth (Taylor, 2023). This may give a teacher confidence in their professionalism; choosing their growth path may help them feel valued and trusted (Taylor, 2023). PG involves ongoing reflection and evaluation of the strategies used in the classroom and using data and feedback to drive decisions and improvement.

By continuously developing skills and strategies in instruction, a teacher can remain current, relevant, and better serve the needs of all learners. Successful school leaders stimulate growth in their staff's professional capacity, and the leadership team at St. Kizito school must encourage and motivate the staff to participate in PG in a way that reflects the school community's needs (Leithwood et al., 2020). If PG is determined individually, having a general school-wide goal that can be reached through individual growth will be beneficial. However, teachers are unique and have different lived experiences; thus, allowing them to meet school-wide goals by planning their own growth may be seen as empowering and can increase fulfillment (Taylor, 2023). The following subsection describes the resources required for Solution Two.

Resources Required

Identifying resources required for individual teacher development can be challenging because of the many options available to teachers in this solution. Some of the resources required may include books, instructional materials, and access to technology. Teachers may participate in online courses, workshops, and conferences, which all require time allocation. Regardless of a teacher's path, they will require time to complete their growth and be self-reflective. Many of the PG options available for teachers will also require financial support regardless of the learning mode.

Solution Three: Professional Consultants

Historically there has been a tendency to bring outside expertise to engage teachers in PG, and this model can be valuable for teachers (Hofman & Dijkstra, 2010). Undoubtedly there are experts in many areas of pedagogical practice who could share relevant and current knowledge with teaching staff to improve their practice. Through professional consultants, PG is

an effective way to ensure educators have the knowledge and skills needed to provide quality instruction to students. Professional consultants can provide targeted training that helps teachers improve their pedagogical practices. They can also work with school leaders to create an overall plan for teacher development that emphasizes collaboration and continuous improvement. Of course, PG aimed at improving teacher effectiveness also increases student success (Knight, 2012; Taylor, 2023). By providing quality PG opportunities, I, the St. Kizito school principal, can ensure teachers are equipped to meet their students' needs and ensure they have successful learning experiences.

Importantly, professional development should be research-based and data-informed (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009). When creating a PG plan for teachers, the St. Kizito school administrative team can use data from provincial achievement tests, school progress reports, needs assessments, and student work analysis to inform the staff's learning priorities (Campbell et al., 2016). Once the priorities are identified, it then becomes essential to find qualified instructors, coaches, or consultants who can provide in-school sessions for staff. The HFSD has a learning services department with many instructional consultants who could support the learning needs of the St. Kizito school staff. Outside agencies/consultants can be hired for in-person or online sessions if the school budget allows.

Subject matter knowledge and pedagogical knowledge are important for both beginning teacher PG and for the continued professional learning of veteran teachers (Campbell et al., 2016). Supporting teachers in their professional development through coaching and in-school PG opportunities can build teachers' confidence and positively affect student learning (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009). Targeting the needs of the school staff to improve pedagogical practices

that enhance feelings of belonging can be achieved by hiring outside consultants to support teacher PG. The next subsection describes the resources needed for Solution Three.

Resources Required

The main resource required to facilitate in-school professional development will be experienced consultants. Consultants may provide guidance on developing lesson plans, implementing instructional strategies, and creating assessments. Whether done in-house or via online sessions, consultants can help teachers master content when well-designed (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009). If facilitated through online sessions, access to technology will be required.

Unsurprisingly, embedded, ongoing, and intensive PG can be costly. Thus, a cost analysis must be completed before proceeding with such a plan. Time is another resource required to facilitate this type of PG. Finding time for teachers to learn from and collaborate with consultants is essential for the efficacy of this solution. Time is a finite resource as teachers' salaried work time is limited (Knight, 2012). But if a teacher's schedule permits, in-school PG can be quite beneficial as it requires less travel time for teachers, it can be geared to the needs of the school through a school-wide PG plan, and it can allow for individual support. As the school principal, I must determine whether or not a solution is cost-effective. Thus, in the next section, I compare the solutions to determine the best one.

Comparison of Solutions

In comparing the three proposed solutions, one thing is abundantly clear: School staff need PG to enhance their cultural awareness and positively impact students (Rodriguez et al., 2022). While individually chosen PG sessions can be somewhat beneficial for teachers, research

shows they are often insufficient at prompting teachers to change their instructional practices (Boyle et al., 2005). Teachers who participate in a collective type of PG and action research, especially among their workplace colleagues, may become more reflective and analytical about their personal practice (Boyle et al., 2005). Giving teachers autonomy in PG may allow them to pursue areas of interest, but more collective growth is needed for a community of practice. Gearing PG to meet school goals may be a more effective way to improve school-wide practices and collective efficacy.

Moreover, CTE is so influential that it supersedes the link between socioeconomic status and achievement (Donohoo, 2017). This is most profound when considering the diverse demographic at St. Kizito school. Conflicts with work schedules can prevent teachers from participating in PG ergo in-school sessions may be most beneficial (Taylor, 2023). Professional consultants can enhance in-school PG, but they can be expensive, and St. Kizito school does not have the budget to afford such luxuries. Also, this type of one-off PG does not change practice as much as planned, incremental change would. Another drawback of hiring consultants is that it does not fit with the urgency of equity related to this OIP. There is also a body of expertise in the building among the teaching staff and by implementing a PLC, teachers will be able to learn from each other. According to Boyle et al. (2005), 72% of teachers preferred learning by observing their colleagues and 62% preferred sharing practice. Finding professional consultants knowledgeable in areas specifically addressing the context of St. Kizito school is also a shortcoming. Student needs at St. Kizito school are specific, so its teachers require pedagogical knowledge that builds belongingness, ultimately affecting student performance. Table 1 shows a comparison of the proposed solutions as determined by the St. Kizito leadership team. It is clear

from the data in the table that solution one (implementing a PLC) is the best path forward for change at St. Kizito school.

Table 1

Comparison of Proposed Solutions

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely
Does the solution improve belongingness for students?	1	3	2	
Does the solution change teacher mindset?		1	2, 3	
Does the solution change school structure?	1	3		2
Are the resources available for the solution?	1	2, 3		
Can time be accessed to embed the solution?	1		2, 3	

Note. Solutions were plotted in the table according to the order they were presented in this OIP: 1. PLC, 2. Individual PG, and 3. Professional Consultants.

Ethical Considerations

The solutions presented and compared in this OIP must be understood from the perspective of their ethical implications. The types of change sought in this OIP require school staff to reflect on and address their biases, and systemic inequities, to improve student belongingness and academic and social success. This type of change may be difficult, but it is what is necessary. To achieve this type of change, educators must rely on their morality (e.g., knowing right and wrong) and ethically pursue a more equitable learning environment for students (Hargreaves, 2019). Additionally, this type of change begins with ethical leadership. According to Hargreaves (2019), leaders must “recognize, inquire into, empathize with, constructively question, and then ultimately bring together multiple identities into one greater whole, without imposing a single, white, colonial or Western identity on everyone” (p. 16).

Ethical educational leadership is enacted by those who are fair, just, and honest, and promote the achievement of all students (Ehrich et al., 2015).

Multiple ethical paradigms may be used to view the PoP and solutions in this OIP according to Shapiro and Stefkovic (2016): through the ethics of justice, care, and critique (p. 19). To view the PoP through an ethic of justice, two guiding policies should be considered. First, the HFSD has an administrative procedure, stating that the district welcomes cultural diversity, that schools will address the academic and cultural needs of students, and staff will provide students with high quality programming (HFSD, 2020). Second, the provincial government mandates all teachers to meet the Teaching Quality Standards (2020), which includes "affirming that every student can learn and be successful" (p. 6). These policies emphasize a commitment to equity and are aligned with an ethic of justice.

The ethic of critique causes one to rethink concepts and challenge the status quo (Shapiro & Stefkovic, 2016). To make known the voices silenced, schools must empower a decolonizing leadership instead of a leadership developed in an oppressive, colonial form (Capper, 2019; Khalifa et al., 2019). Increasing student belongingness by improving practices like CRP will support teachers in empowering students and challenging inequitable systemic structures (Hammond, 2015).

School staff must become culturally responsive to better the education system for all students. This is directly aligned with the ethic of care. To put students at the centre and consider multiple voices, school leaders must change a system, which currently cannot meet the needs of learners with diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds (Pearce, 2018, Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2016, Villegas & Lucas 2002). Strong leaders possess their own ethical traits and also develop through their interactions and engagement with others (Liu, 2017). As agents of change,

educational leaders need to make decisions that benefit all, such as challenging oppressive structures in schools, and they must do so with a strong ethical compass and effective leadership skills. The next subsection highlights the selected solution for change to address the oppressive challenges in the PoP.

Preferred Solution

Table 1 presents the optimal solution to address this OIP, which involves the implementation of a PLC at St. Kizito school. This choice has been selected as the preferred course of action to reach the goal state. The leadership team plotted each solution on the table based on their anticipated effectiveness, and the PLC earned a score of 19 out of 20, making it the highest-ranked solution. Research demonstrates that continuous professional learning within a school-based PLC fosters a nurturing and successful environment (Owen, 2016).

To deconstruct and reconstruct educational practices at St. Kizito school, it is necessary to immerse staff in planned, progressive PG instead of engaging in random, disconnected sessions (Ladson-Billings, 1998; Rodriguez et al., 2022). A PLC can be effective if it supports teachers' learning in a supportive, collaborative environment to build skills and strengthen their pedagogical practice (Carter, 2014; Donohoo, 2017; Owen, 2016). The solution to the PoP is teacher growth, and a PLC will enable collective growth at St. Kizito school. When all teachers learn together within the school context, all students benefit (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Donohoo, 2017). A PLC can provide advantages for teachers by affording a collaborative environment that encourages teachers to build on the successful practices of some of the existing staff. This collaboration allows teachers to learn from each other to develop their instructional strategies and create a supportive atmosphere where they can work together to improve teaching and learning (Carter, 2014; Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Owen, 2016). Implementing a PLC at

St. Kizito school will allow the staff to grow together as they develop skills and culturally responsive instructional practices. When teachers acknowledge and actively incorporate students' cultural backgrounds, attitudes, and values in the learning environment, they create positive learning outcomes by helping students develop a sense of cultural identity and critical awareness of their own and others' backgrounds (Gay, 1993, 2015; Hammond, 2015; Khalifa, 2021).

Chapter Summary

This chapter identified the change leader's approaches to change as being a combination of authentic leadership and CRSL. These two approaches complement one another and work well with CRT to support a social justice leader. Deszca et al.'s CPM (2020) was presented as the framework for leading the proposed change weaving theoretical underpinnings with a pragmatic change plan. The readiness of St. Kizito school was assessed using a SWOT analysis and readiness questionnaire revealing the school's strengths and opportunities. Three solutions to the PoP were proposed, and the implementation of a PLC was identified as the best possible solution to address teachers' capacity to increase student belongingness and academic achievement. This solution is the optimal path for change to enhance teacher capacity, foster belongingness, and improve scholastic achievement.

Chapter 3: Implementation, Communication, and Evaluation

The first chapter of this OIP discussed the organizational context of St. Kizito school and the HFSD. It also highlighted the need to increase belongingness in the school's diverse student body. Chapter 2 explored leadership approaches to change and provided a change framework and possible solutions for the PoP. Establishing a PLC was determined to be the most appropriate solution. Chapter 3 focuses on developing an action plan comprising three components; the change implementation plan (CIP), the communication plan, and the monitoring and evaluation framework. This section describes the steps and actions necessary to introduce and integrate change within St. Kizito school successfully. Thus, the following subsection describes the CIP, to which I now turn.

Change Implementation Plan

The CIP of this OIP identifies the goals for the desired change and aligns them with the goals of St. Kizito school and the HFSD. A well-crafted CIP will help ensure smooth and effective change with minimal disruptions and challenges. The proposed solution—supporting teacher growth through a PLC—will be framed using the CPM. Additionally, I—the school's principal, who embodies authentic and culturally responsive leadership traits—will lead the implementation plan (Descza et al., 2020).

The CIP should implement a PLC in which teacher leaders will help build the entire staff's capacity. Lasting change at school is more likely when its teachers are involved in the planning and process (Carpenter, 2014; Huijboom et al., 2020). It is not only essential to have clear and specific goals in place and to regularly assess the progress of the plan to ensure the desired future state will be met. It is also important that the change leader believes they can achieve these goals (Klein et al., 2008). The change leader must also have a deep understanding

of the organization and a clear vision of the intended outcomes (Descza et al., 2020). They then involve all stakeholders in the planning and implementation of the change to ensure buy-in and support for the proposed vision.

To address a gap in achievement at St. Kizito school, teachers' capacity to enhance belongingness and increase academic success will be built in a PLC. The short-term goals of this OIP will be to collect data on belonging and student achievement, set goals, and establish a PLC. Medium-term goals include staff analyzing student data and engaging in professional conversations to determine how they will achieve the school goals. Long-term goals include school staff working collaboratively to implement culturally responsive pedagogical practices, increase student belonging, improve academic success, and embed organizational change within the school culture.

Alignment

The HFSD has a Learning Services (LS) department composed of consultants and supervisors who support staff and students in all district schools. The LS have two sub-departments that are integral to the work of equitable practices at St. Kizito school. First is the Indigenous Education Department whose members support staff in teaching foundational Indigenous knowledge and culture through PG sessions; support students and families of the district; and liaise with members of First Nations communities regarding education, decision-making, and planning (HFSD, 2022a).

The second subdepartment is the Racial Justice Department, whose members lead the District Racial Justice Committee, support school leaders and teachers in improving equity in the classroom, and liaise with the community (HFSD, 2022a). The Racial Justice Department has created a three-year plan to address equity in HFSD by gathering data, supporting staff in

becoming culturally responsive, and performing an equity audit as seen in the Equity Framework (Figure 2). This framework identifies a district-level support for the change plan at St. Kizito school. According to the framework, school equity can be addressed by increasing culturally responsive teaching and learning practices, building equity leadership capacity, and increasing community engagement. Of course, all change plans—including this OIP—require careful, calculated implementation to be successful. Thus, the following subsection describes the implementation process for the present OIP.

The Implementation Process

Descza et al.'s (2020) CPM was chosen because it aligns with the context of St. Kizito school. This OIP's vision responds to the school's changing demographic and recognizes that students of culturally and racially marginalized groups are at disproportionate risk of failure (Ladson-Billings, 2021). The steps and actions necessary for change are described in Appendix C.

The proposed change in this OIP can be characterized as incremental, a gradual approach where improvements will be made over time (Descza et al., 2020). The goal is to bring about steady improvement that is manageable and sustainable and can be seamlessly embedded into school culture. A PLC will be created in which teachers will participate in a collective learning process. During this process, teachers will become adept at increasing student belonging—particularly racialized students—through CRP with correlate increases in students' academic success (Huijboom et al., 2020). The process will be monitored and evaluated using plan-do-study-act cycles. The next subsection describes how the transition will be managed.

Managing the Transition and Change

The teachers and teacher leaders at St. Kizito school will undoubtedly have an impact on the proposed change, and their participation will be critical to the success of this OIP. Nonetheless, the school principal is ultimately responsible for driving the change efforts, particularly in its initial stages, demanding adept change management (Burke, 2018; Deszca et al, 2020). As the change leader, the principal must be attuned to the environment and its potential impacts on the change process (Burke, 2018). External factors affecting the proposed changes include the school district's senior leadership, provincial mandates, and community needs. The principal's awareness of these variables is paramount.

Internal factors impacting potential change efforts include students, their current achievement levels and social-emotional needs, staff, and pedagogical methods and expertise. In collaboration with the change team, the principal must act to orchestrate resource allocation, appoint capable teachers to leadership roles, and prioritize effective communication and monitoring as change agents must be involved in the planning and process (Kang, 2015). These actions will collectively support the principal's plan to manage the change efforts in this OIP.

As the change leader, I will be primarily responsible for establishing the need for change, providing clarity and direction, and communicating the vision. I will introduce the change and reinforce the key messages with staff. I will lead the change leadership team consisting of the principal, assistant principal, and two teacher leaders. This team will be responsible for gathering data and resources, analyzing data, and developing the vision and plan for change. The teacher leaders will plan and manage the PLC meetings, meet periodically with the leadership team to analyze data and adjust plans, and be available to staff for support. What follows are the phases of the CIP for which I will provide leadership.

Phase 1: Awakening

The first phase of the CIP focuses on data analysis and developing a vision (Deszca et al., 2020). The leadership team at St. Kizito school will meet to examine data, including progress report marks, reading levels, and student and staff survey results. Phase 1 will occur over five months in the first year of change implementation. The leadership team will meet twice monthly from April to June and reconvene in September following the summer break. The team will gather data and conduct stakeholder interviews. Interviewees will include students, staff, and parents. Students will be asked about their level of belonging in the school setting. Staff will be asked about their current level of knowledge of CRP. Moreover, parents will be asked to identify barriers that prevent them from participating in school activities and events. These interviews will likely support the team in identifying a starting point for the change efforts.

Using the Congruence Model (Nadler & Tushman, 1980) as a guide for our analysis, we will critique the school's resources and environment and gather pertinent data for planning purposes. This model works well with the CPM because it takes a comprehensive look at the organization and forces the change leader to analyze all factors contributing to the gap (Deszca et al., 2020). Researchers agree there are deep roots of systemic racism in education, and teacher practices need to change to meet a diverse student population's social and academic needs (Khalifa, 2020; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Rodriguez et al., 2022). The gap presented in the PoP is between the current reality and the desired state being teachers' ability to foster student belonging and academic success. The team will create a vision to address this gap by building teachers' capacities in equitable instructional practices. The team will also help direct the change effort and determine what levers can be used to persuade stakeholders (Pollack & Pollack, 2015).

This vision and change effort will be effectively facilitated by a school principal who embodies authentic leadership qualities and a CRT lens.

Phase 2: Mobilization

Mobilization includes further developing the vision for change, communicating the vision, and assessing how the current situation and staff can be leveraged to support the change efforts (Deszca et al., 2020). During Phase 2, school staff will be engaged on a broader basis, and the PLC will be implemented. The vision will be communicated through the school plan, PG sessions, staff meetings, written communication, and informal conversations. During the PLC meetings, systemic racist structures in the educational system will be identified. Indeed, "built into the fabric of schools are curricular, pedagogical, and evaluative practices that privilege the affluent, White, and male segments of society" and these practices must be addressed (Vilegas & Lucas, 2002, p. 22). Schools with much racial diversity often have less experienced teachers with higher turnover rates, the funding may be lower, and the resources are typically also lacking (Gay, 2018). Some groups in schools have access to resources while others do not; some groups are represented in the curriculum, and others are not; teacher and leadership training often do not offer adequate education on equity issues and social justice; and in some educational settings, race and culture are taboo topics (Capper, 2019).

During Phase 2, PLC leaders will support teachers in identifying their personal biases and complacency. Considering CRP helps teachers to identify and change their mindset to build relationships with the students and the content (Hammond, 2015). Supporting teachers in becoming skilled in CRP will include instilling the following components:

- Developing a knowledge base about cultural diversity
- Including ethnically and culturally diverse content in the curriculum

- Demonstrating caring and building learning communities
- Communicating with ethnically diverse students
- Responding to ethnic diversity in the delivery of instruction (Gay, 2002, p. 106).

Phase 3: Acceleration

As improvements are made, the team will create opportunities for short-term wins. It is important to implement achievable goals and recognize the wins, which will help to maintain momentum and morale (Deszca, 2020). Celebrations may include visual displays in the school, verbal recognition in student assemblies and staff meetings, and outside-of-school recognition in the school newsletter and on the website and social media (e.g., Facebook). In particular, the change leadership team must regularly celebrate school and classroom successes to ensure students are part of the change process.

There will be two scheduled PLC meetings each month. During this time, teachers will meet to talk with and learn from colleagues and be assigned tasks. Following each PLC meeting, teachers must use newly learned pedagogical practices in the classroom. They may attempt their new practices on their own, with a teaching partner, or with support from teacher leaders. The first part of each subsequent PLC will be spent discussing progress and obstacles identified by each teacher. Following this discussion, in which challenges can be addressed, new content will be shared with staff to ensure continuous learning. Discussion during PLC time as well as classroom observations and informal conversations will be used to understand teachers' reactions to the change and, at this time, adjustments to the process can be made. Furthermore, teachers will be asked to complete exit slips at the end of each PLC meeting. The change leadership team can use the information gathered from these exits slips to determine whether staff have learned

previous content and are ready for new knowledge. This information will help determine a range of appropriate learning paces for staff throughout the school year.

Phase 4: Institutionalization

Embedding organizational change will occur in the institutionalization stage (Deszca et al., 2020). By this time, the goals have been laid out, a timeline has been created, and responsibilities have been assigned to ensure school staff understand the process. During this phase, the team will track the changes and pivot when necessary (Deszca et al., 2020). During the two- to three-year process, leadership within the school will be developed to ensure succession.

Moreover, CRP will be embedded in the school plan and common language will be used with staff and students to develop and increase their shared knowledge and understanding. Teachers' actions can be altered through the PLC—tasks will be assigned so teachers can attempt new strategies and bring feedback to the PLC—to shift the culture. This culture shift is necessary as CRP is not simply a set of strategies to be used in the classroom, but rather it is a mindset (Khalifa, 2021). By being reflective in their practices, teachers can address their implicit biases and practice social-emotional awareness to be responsive to diverse students' needs (Hammond, 2015). When these culture and mindset shifts occur, teachers will have the knowledge and skills to meet the needs of all students at St. Kizito school.

Potential Implementation Issues and Limitations

Creating a shift in culture and implementing new pedagogical practices may be challenging (Fullan, 2006). To prevent resistance, the leader must use their social influence and turn resistors into followers (Battilana & Casciaro, 2013; Klein, 1996). It is important to anticipate potential challenges and limitations to minimize them and ensure this OIP's success.

One potential challenge that may limit this OIP's success is a lack of buy-in from all stakeholders. If all stakeholders do not share the change vision or see its value, they can hinder progress and make it difficult to achieve the desired outcomes (Battilana & Casciaro, 2023). It is natural for stakeholders to question change, which does not necessarily mean they oppose it. The change leader must be prepared to build buy-in along the journey, nurturing support by ensuring stakeholders know the benefits outweigh the costs (Descza et al., 2020). Mobilizing support is crucial to the effectiveness of organizational change, and this can be supported by enhancing communication throughout the process (Endrejat et al., 2021). Finding the cause of resistance can also support the progress of the change initiative, specifically rooting out dispositional resistance (a negative personal feeling toward the change), which can change the trajectory of the change agents' actions (Oreg, 2018).

Further potential limitations are time, funding, and other resources crucial to systemic change (Cartegena & Slater, 2021). Indeed, time is often limited for teachers. Along with full teaching schedules, the teachers at St. Kizito school lead extra-curricular clubs at lunchtime and after school. They also use time outside of their daily schedules to prepare lessons and assess student work. Therefore, increasing the staffing allocation at the school would be most helpful. A teacher whose responsibilities included supporting staff in their PG without having a defined classroom schedule would have the time and flexibility to enhance the school culture and climate. Without increasing the school budget, resources are a potential implementation issue. Resources required for the intended change in this OIP include time, books, instructional materials, access to technology, and teacher-leader training. To accomplish this change, a plan is required to communicate the need for change and the change process. The next section presents a detailed description of that communication plan.

Plan to Communicate the Need for Change and the Change Process

The proposed change process's efficacy will be dependent on the motivation and participation of the school staff, students, parents, community members, HFSD leaders, and the leadership team at St. Kizito school. Effective transition management involves communicating clearly and frequently with all stakeholders about the change, its purpose, and the expected outcomes (Tanner & Otto, 2016). To ensure all stakeholders work together to implement sustainable change, it is necessary to communicate clearly throughout the process. Organizational members should be made aware of the proposed changes in the planning stage and during the iterative cycles of change. They should also be allowed to provide feedback (Klein, 1996: Descza et al., 2020).

Communication of the envisioned change of this OIP is integral to a successful outcome. It will be necessary to ensure that all organizational participants are aware of the importance of the proposed change (Endrejat et al., 2021). In this subsection, an intentional and integral communication plan will be presented. This plan will focus on building awareness of the need for change, framing the issues, and communicating the path of change. A knowledge mobilization plan, which synthesizes this information is presented in Appendix D.

Communicating the Path of Change

Communicating the change path will support all stakeholders in embracing and contributing to the vision. It will involve engaging in brave and honest discussions to establish a common understanding of the change process and desired outcomes. The school leader must foster a culture and climate of trust, respect, and collaboration to support all staff members in the process. Additionally, stakeholder feedback is needed throughout the process to allow for improvements and to ensure all stakeholders remain committed to the same path. Poor

communication can cause significant hindrances to an envisioned change plan if the change leader does not effectively communicate the vision, follow through, offer support, or communicate about implementation (Endrejat et al., 2021; Husain, 2013; Lewis, 2019). Therefore, effective communication with all organizational actors is vital to the success of this OIP. Specifically, the change leadership team will ensure effective communication and coordination between stakeholders so that all St. Kizito school stakeholders move in a common direction. Communication will be essential to minimize rumours and misunderstandings, mobilize all participants to work toward a common goal, and maintain enthusiasm for the vision (Descza et al., 2020). One part of communicating the path of change is building awareness, which is considered in the following subsection.

Building Awareness

It is crucial to the OIP's efficacy that all stakeholders of the change process—including students—know its intended outcomes and are supporters of the vision. This knowledge will prevent negative attitudes and adverse effects (Klein, 1996). Employees may have negative attitudes if communication is unclear, they believe their concerns are not being addressed, and they do not perceive they have control over how they do their jobs (Klein, 1996). As change recipients, it is important to include the students in the process, by communicating the plan in the classrooms and receiving student feedback through surveys and exit slips. Building awareness of the need for organizational change, each participant's role in the change vision and how it will affect them will be essential to the OIP's success (Tanner & Otto, 2016).

Building awareness of the proposed change for St. Kizito school will occur during the first phase of the CIP—the Awakening. During this phase teachers, students, parents, and community members of St. Kizito school will be made aware of the need to create a welcoming,

culturally responsive learning environment for its students. Data collected will be shared with staff during staff meetings, PG days, and during PLC meetings. Proposed changes will be communicated to students through common language used in classrooms and school assemblies and through visuals (e.g., posters) displayed throughout the school. Parents and community members will be made aware of the vision for change through personal conversations, newsletters, school council meetings, and the school website. The change leadership team will collaborate to develop the vision and strategies that will ultimately support fostering a culturally responsive school climate and culture. In addition to building awareness, a knowledge mobilization plan is also needed. This plan is described and explained in the next subsection.

Knowledge Mobilization Plan

Knowledge mobilization (KMb) is the process of sharing knowledge from research to inform decision-making so everyone can benefit (MacGregor & Phipps, 2020). KMb can encourage new opportunities for partnerships and collaboration and is important for this OIP and the envisioned future state of equity. According to Lavis et al. (2003), five questions must be answered when communicating knowledge: What is the message? Who is the target audience? Who will be the messenger? How should knowledge be transferred? And what should the effect be of this transfer? By collectively answering these questions, all members of the St. Kizito school community gain a deeper understanding of the need to embrace diversity and evolve pedagogical practices to address equity. This collective understanding can develop through a KMb plan by sharing and utilizing knowledge through different channels and formats to enhance understanding. The administrative team will communicate with school staff through a PLC (facilitated by teacher leaders), PG sessions, staff meetings, and resource sharing. Parents and community members will be engaged through personal communication, weekly electronic

messaging, parent/community engagement nights, and at school council meetings. Sharing knowledge can support change processes, and those involved in them, by encouraging continuous improvement, intentional change, and the pursuit of vision (MacGregor & Phipps, 2020). By connecting people who possess different types of knowledge, KMb can ensure that information is shared, processed, and applied in a meaningful and efficient way. The mid-phase of this plan, implementing a PLC, will be the key to this OIP as knowledge mobilization on belongingness and CRP are integral to this work. A visual representation of KMb for this OIP can be found in Appendix D. The following subsection describes the communication phases.

Communication Phases

Because the CIP of this OIP will be structured in four phases, so will the communication plan. Appendix E shows the communication needs for each phase of: awakening, mobilization, acceleration, and institutionalization.

Communication in Phase 1: The Awakening

During the awakening stage, communication is crucial to the effectiveness of the change team and the vision. Communication will begin with the team identifying the purpose and objectives of the vision. This can be done through stakeholder interviews, informal conversations, and data analysis. Once the plan is developed, it is important to communicate with all stakeholders. This communication must be done in an organized and effective manner, including clear timelines. When the change team meets semi-monthly to create the implementation plan, they will assess the current level of belongingness at St. Kizito school and develop a plan to improve it.

The data to be analyzed will include progress reports, student reading inventory levels, survey data, and student questionnaire data (Appendix F). Survey data will be gleaned from the OSS, which is given to students annually. Current OSS results from St. Kizito students show that almost 20% of students believe they have been treated unfairly at school because of their race or culture, 67% of students worry that other students do not think they are good enough, 35% of students do not feel good about themselves, and almost 20% of students do not believe people care about each other at school (HFSD, 2022). Overall, this data validates the necessity for change. A belonging questionnaire (Appendix F) is the second means of data collection through which students can communicate their sense of belonging. Answers to the questions will give the change team specific areas for improvement to address.

Communication in Phase 2: The Mobilization

During the mobilization phase, action will be further developed through analyses of school data and discussions regarding the change process. The PLC is an ideal time and place for this phase as they are highly effective for teacher development and collaboration, sharing goals, and communication to and among staff (Owen, 2016). As the staff may need all the information and data that the leadership team has access to, the PLC will be opportune for the change team to share the vision with staff and further develop the goals of the vision (Deszca et al., 2020). During Phase 2, effective communication of the CIP remains important.

Simultaneously, an increasing importance for success lies in the staff's ability to engage in collaborative communication among themselves. It is not only about communicating the message, but also opportunities must be created for staff to engage in discussions, reflection, and meaning making regarding student achievement. Informal types of communication which will be important during PLC meetings are sharing opinions and views, expressing hopes and values,

sharing stories, and providing feedback to colleagues (Lewis, 2019; Watson, 2014). The PLC is designed for highly effective communication. Teachers will converse about curriculum and instruction, set goals, critique one another, question concepts, and participate in reflective dialogue (Watson, 2014). Other types of communication important to Phase 2 will be for the leadership team to clarify roles and responsibilities and to continually remind all stakeholders of the vision and goals (Lewis, 2019). During this phase, the data collected and the processes in the school and classrooms must be analyzed to determine how to create a place of belonging for everyone. As the plans develop, the stakeholders must contribute to their acceleration, a process described in the next subsection.

Communication in Phase 3: The Acceleration

A communication plan will be essential to accelerate the change at St. Kizito school effectively. Therefore, structures and processes are vital to Phase 3 (Husain, 2013). During the acceleration phase, the change plan is implemented while the leadership team manages the transitions and builds momentum (Deszca et al., 2020). The leadership team can repeatedly and routinely remind staff of the vision via clear communication during staff meetings, in PLC meetings, and through visual displays in the school, such as bulletin and message boards.

Communication among stakeholders and feedback to the change team are integral in the acceleration phase. Soliciting input will also increase the potential success of this OIP, as it can lower resistance and increase stakeholder satisfaction (Bordia et al., 2004). Collecting stakeholder feedback will help to analyze progress, challenge misconceptions, and make any necessary adjustments. This phase empowers people, and teacher skills will be built during PLC meetings. These meetings are an effective time for staff to learn collectively, report back on strategies implemented in the classroom, and support each other to improve pedagogical

practices (Owen, 2016). Effective communication will be crucial in PLC meetings and the PLC model will be integral to establishing a process of KMb that not only shares knowledge but also integrates it into practice.

Communication in Phase 4: Institutionalization

During institutionalization, communication will include sharing accomplishments, contributions, setbacks, and limitations that will inform adjustments. Moreover, the plan will include both internal and external communication channels. Internal communications include staff and PLC meetings, PG sessions, informal conversations, and visual displays. Internal communications during Phase 4 are mainly to reinforce the change and build the capacity of new staff members. Common language is essential for this because when all staff are familiar with key terms, and have instructional support, they can embed newly learned pedagogical practices (Owen, 2016). Experienced staff can mentor staff new to the building, as CRP and belongingness will have become part of the school culture.

Conversely, external communications during Phase 4 include newsletters, emails, the school website, and social media. These channels can inform the school community of progress, publicize successes, share celebrations, and invite parents to be active members of the school community. Interpersonal communications are effective for engaging traditionally marginalized groups. Therefore, the change leader must encourage staff to connect with parents in person and emphasize listening and monitoring non-verbal communication (Dutta-Bergman, 2005). Engaging parents and families can occur via external communications, parent/teacher conferences, community engagement nights, and personal invitations to school council meetings. Families from racially and culturally diverse communities have historically been less connected to school. It is vital to this OIP and student success that the staff of St. Kizito school work to

engage parents (Gray et al., 2018). Building trust with families and students through effective communication can improve student connection, attitudes toward school, and academic performance (Husain, 2013).

Framing Issues

Framing the issues of this OIP using a critical theory lens will allow me, the St. Kizito school principal, to help other stakeholders to see the value and necessity of the change vision. Doing so with a combined authentic and CRSL approach will support my efforts. School staff must be aware of who has access to resources in the education system, who does not, and who is represented in the curriculum (Capper, 2019). Such issues—lack of resources and representation—can contribute to students' lack of belongingness. Awareness of these issues will help others understand the need for more culturally responsive education at St. Kizito school (Hammond, 2015). If students currently lack a sense of belonging that hinders them from academic success, all organizational participants should know the reasons for this inequity and how to correct it. As the change leader, I must now interpret this PoP and effectively communicate it to others by managing meaning (Fairhurst, 2011). I will communicate the vision to staff, in person, during a PG session at the beginning of the school year. This way, a question-and-answer period can occur where I can address any queries. A survey can also be sent to staff after the session so I can evaluate their level of understanding and address further questions. This will support the plan and ensure a successful start.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluating organizational change is important throughout the change process to ensure the action plan is being followed. These processes help to determine whether adjustments are needed to prevent unintended deviation and consequences. It is also important to

increase stakeholder motivation, as they are more likely to participate when they know their actions are effective and worthwhile (Deszca et al., 2020). Therefore, a monitoring and evaluation framework can be helpful to monitor progress and inform decision-making regarding adjustments (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016). Such a framework should be developed concurrently with the CIP.

Monitoring will occur routinely throughout the CIP, and evaluation will happen at certain strategic points (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016). Evaluation is the overall process, and monitoring can be considered a subset of it. If the planned, systematic change includes implementing a PLC to improve teachers' ability to be culturally responsive, it will be crucial to monitor and evaluate this process to determine its effectiveness. Notably, the monitoring and evaluation will be done using a Plan, Do, Study Act (PDSA) cycle.

Plan, Do, Study, Act

The Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA) cycle is an iterative process for evaluating change that will be used in this OIP, represented in Figure 5 (Deming, 1994). The evaluative cycle is a four-step process, rooted in the scientific method that allows evaluators to plan and test change, observe results, and act on what they have learned (Leis & Shojania, 2017; Murray, 2018; Taylor et al., 2014). This model was selected for monitoring and evaluation because it is flexible, logical, and efficient (Taylor et al., 2014).

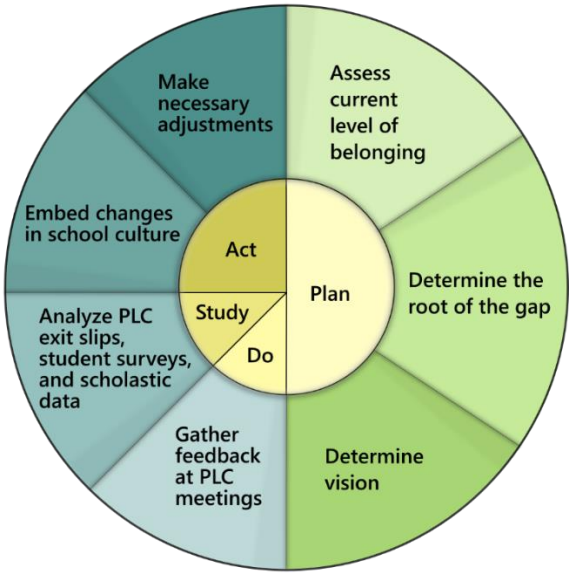
In the first step, *plan*, the change leader identifies goals, makes predictions, and creates a plan to measure and evaluate change implementation. The second step is *do*, in which the change leader monitors the transitions. The third step is *study*, wherein the change process is analyzed to determine signs of success or areas of improvement. The final step is *act*, in which the change

leader determines whether changes are working and plans their future actions (Deming, 1994). This cycle is repeated so there is continual growth in the organization (Murray, 2018).

Using PDSA cycles to evaluate the envisioned change in this OIP will support the monitoring and evaluation of the process. The cycle's iterative process can also help to garner increased support through each cycle as organizational members can engage it (Leis & Shojania, 2017). The PDSA cycle can be used for KMb by planning how knowledge will be shared and accessed, doing research to support the plan, studying the research results, and then acting on the findings. This process ensures that knowledge is mobilized in a systematic and effective manner. Through this iterative, complex cycle of change, success will be more likely as the team is better able to respond to obstacles and unintended outcomes (Taylor et al., 2014).

Figure 5

PDSA Cycle



Note. Adapted from PDSA Approach (Cleary, 2015).

Phase 1: Awakening

This first step to monitoring the awakening phase involves thoroughly analyzing the current situation at St. Kizito school before thinking about how to improve it (Cleary, 2015). Understanding the staff and the students' needs is crucial in this step. The leadership team must assess the current level of belongingness at St. Kizito school and analyze the root of the gap. During the awakening phase of this PoP, goals will be identified using data gathered at the school level. Student belonging can be difficult to measure, as it is hard to quantify how well connected to school a student feels by analyzing academic levels or provincial achievement test data. Instead, this measurement can be taken using student surveys and questionnaires (Appendix F). The leadership team will analyze which pedagogical practices must be eliminated and which must be improved to provide students with the best educational opportunities possible.

One hundred twenty students at St. Kizito school completed a survey using a Likert scale where they were asked questions to which their potential responses were: strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree. In this survey, conducted in 2022, students were asked if they felt accepted at school. In all, 12% responded strongly disagree and 22% responded disagree (HFSD, 2022). This lack of a sense of acceptance is a strong indicator that it is necessary to increase student belongingness.

A second set of data that can be used to monitor the process in Phase 1 are exit slips teachers completed during a PG session. Teachers were asked several questions during a school-based PG session in May, 2023 and they will be asked the same questions again at sessions in November, 2023 and February, 2024.

Questions included were: What do you believe should be the priorities for student wellness this school year? Do students in your class feel as though they belong? How do you

know? What is your understanding of racial justice? What is your understanding of CRP? What are your literacy and numeracy goals for the classroom? Which current pedagogical practices do you believe will be best to address literacy and numeracy goals?

From this data, it can be determined whether ensuring students feel connected to school is a priority for teachers. A second priority gleaned from teacher responses may be to support students' academic needs—more specifically to ensure more students can read at or above grade level. The team will analyze the data collected and determine how these gaps can be addressed. They can also use this phase to determine the readiness of staff to meet the immediate and distal goals of the project. The leadership team can then organize the school schedule to accommodate a PLC for teachers in which PLC leaders will support school goals by building the capacity of staff. The goals of the PLC committee will be to allow a safe space for teachers to reflect on their own biases and increase staff knowledge of CRP to improve student belonging, ultimately increasing student academic success. These goals can be monitored during the PLC process by giving staff questionnaires and by revisiting the new results of student surveys, evaluated by the change leadership team using this feedback. The next phase in the monitoring process is mobilization; to which I now turn.

Phase 2: Mobilization

The objective of Phase 2 is to consider the best path for implementing the PLC and the management and logistics of the actual meetings. The administrative team will meet to build the school schedule and ensure time is built in for PLC meetings. The leadership team will then meet with the PLC teacher leaders to create a year-long plan for PLC content. Two teacher leaders will be selected to work with the principal to plan and facilitate the PLC. This group will meet monthly to discuss objectives, debrief past PLC meetings, and plan future sessions. In the

mobilization phase, the effects of the change initiative must be observed and analyzed to determine the efficacy of the plan. In this phase, feedback gathered in the monthly meetings will be crucial to monitoring the effectiveness of the plan.

Phase 3: Acceleration

During the acceleration phase, the staff will be further empowered. In each PLC session, the facilitators will share research and knowledge with staff, allow time for individual reflection and group discussion, ask for feedback via exit slips, and provide staff with a learning goal to be practised prior to the next session. For example, during a PLC session, the facilitators may present information on CRP, allocate time for teachers to assess their current level of knowledge, allow for group discussion to determine how to create common goals using common language, ask for individual feedback using exit slips, challenge each teacher to attempt a new classroom strategy, and ask each teacher to return to the next PLC meeting with feedback. The PLC supports staff in collaboration and can profoundly affect a school culture. When teachers commit to ensuring students learn, they are more likely to elicit high achievement from students (Carpenter, 2014; DuFour, 2004).

Has the PLC been effective? Should it continue? Were there any unexpected outcomes? Are there tweaks that could be made to make it more effective? Have objectives been reached? As the change leader, I will oversee and analyze the data using these questions. However, the PLC team will be instrumental in monitoring and evaluating the success of the PLC. The answers to the questions above will inform the team of what changes are required to keep the vision in sight and able to achieve the desired results. During this stage, the team will take action to incorporate PLC meetings into the schedule and test the proposed solution to the PoP. The team will then be able to measure the results and determine if the solution has been effective.

Depending on the results, the team may need to make adjustments and repeat the cycle until the desired outcome is achieved. This is the stage of the plan where pedagogical practices will be adapted and more culturally relevant instruction will be visible in classrooms. Thus, evidence of improved teacher capacity will be clear.

Phase 4: Institutionalization

Once the PLC effectively supports teachers to increase student belonging, the process must be embedded in the school culture. In this phase the leadership team supports teachers in constructing equitable and socially just relationships. Teachers will reconstruct their agency, allowing them to construct and build student agency. During this phase, the leadership team must plan to embed CRP in the school culture and foster belonging to connect students to school and improve their ability to be academically successful. This change can be achieved by building teachers' capacities and developing leadership among the staff, ensuring staff and students use common language, and shifting the school culture to be a place of cultural responsiveness with equitable access to resources and instruction. In constructing equitable relations of power, students should be able to relate to the lessons being taught and knowledge should be situated within a personal context. This way, students will be more connected to the learning process and, ultimately, more successful (Ladson-Billings, 1998; Gay, 2002). Additionally, student agency must be improved. Building student agency involves incorporating students' background and knowledge into lessons (Vaughn, 2020). To do so, teachers must be adaptive and able to reshape their lessons and instructional practices to support students' learning.

During this phase, it is important to ensure all stakeholders including administrators, teachers, and students are engaged in the process. It is also essential to identify areas for improvement by answering several questions. For instance, have the PLC meetings been

successful? Will any changes be required to embed the process? The leadership team can collect data from progress reports, student surveys on belonging, and exit slips staff fill out at the end of each PLC.

With careful observation and analyses of our actions, we can ask ourselves what we learned and evaluate the plan's effectiveness. This phase aims to test out the proposed changes, observe the effects, and make course corrections. This cycle can be repeated until the changes are embedded in St. Kizito school's culture. The change leader can create continuous change to eliminate the risk of failure (Beycioglu & Kondakci, 2021).

Refining the Implementation Plan

The implementation plan in this OIP will be well-planned and executed, but a system must be in place to ensure its effectiveness. The PDSA cycle allows such an opportunity to refine the plan. The leadership team can act on the data collection and planning findings to execute and study results. They will then be able to refine the plan and repeat the cycle until the desired outcomes are achieved. Continuous change and evaluation will be vital in meeting the demands of the changing student demographic (Beycioglu & Kondakci, 2021). The principal, assistant principal, and the two designated teacher leaders form the change leadership team that will primarily be responsible for driving the change. The leadership team and the remainder of the teaching staff can create an inseparable network that will handle strategic changes to improve efficacy. St. Kizito school has 16 teachers, all of whom can be part of the network. This system is dynamic; the network will be connected, ensuring that inevitable staff changes will not harm the implementation plan. The network can communicate feedback through one-on-one conversations with the leadership team. The network will have built-in time to collaborate and coordinate changes during PLC time. They can also give written feedback to the leadership team

using exit slips at each PLC meeting. This structured planning time allows the network to be in constant communication with each other and the administrative team, allowing for time to discuss the effectiveness of the change plan and propose refinements.

Chapter Summary

This chapter described implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and communication strategies. At the core, the chapter outlined a strategic implementation plan segmented into four phases: awakening, mobilization, acceleration, and institutionalization. Also, the chapter included a blueprint for communication tailored to mirror the four phases of the CIP. This strategic alignment of communication and implementation was coordinated to guide the change. Ongoing assessment, driven by PDSA cycles, will provide a structured framework for evaluating the change plan's efficacy. With each cycle, there will be continual improvement as insights gleaned are channeled back into the CIP. The orchestration of implementation, communication, and evaluation as a roadmap to change will foster continuous improvement.

Next Steps and Future Considerations

The staff of St. Kizito school are passionate about education. They are a collegial, collaborative group of educators who work hard to provide students with a safe and welcoming learning environment. This OIP aims to strengthen the capacities of St. Kizito school teachers so students can benefit from their intentional and strategic practices. Following the process of this OIP, they will be well-equipped to provide culturally responsive pedagogical practices to increase student belonging and improve academic success.

Ultimately, this OIP provides me with a framework and processes to envision and facilitate change within St. Kizito school. Through the research completed to develop this OIP, I

came to better understand and hone my leadership philosophy, my attributes, and my ability to effectively improve equitable access to education for all students.

The next steps after this change vision will be to connect families to the school and ensure staff are authentic to their traditions and culture. My future research goals will be to continue to dismantle oppressive structures in education and empower students to reach their full potential.

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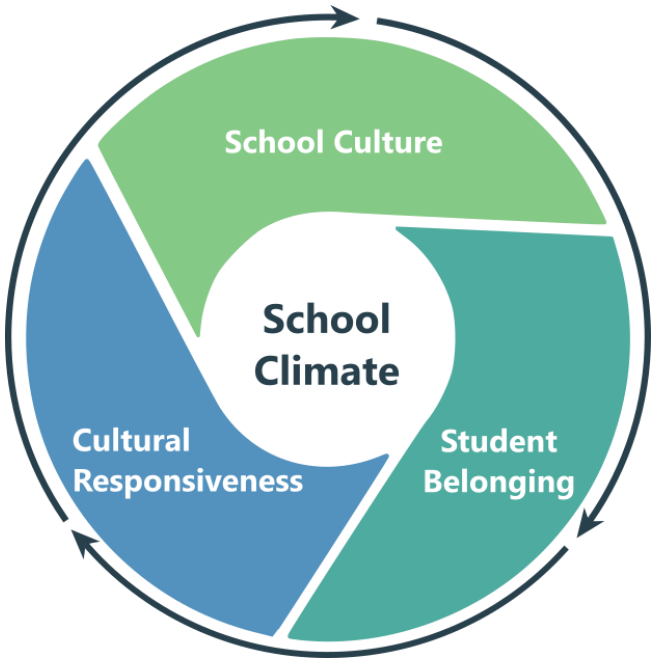
Appendix A

Factors that Shape School Climate



Note. This figure represents the elements that shape school climate. Specifically, school culture, student belongingness, and a culturally responsive staff can promote a positive school culture.

Appendix B

Rate the Organization's Readiness for Change

Readiness Dimensions	Potential Score	Readiness Score
Previous Change Experiences		
1. Has the organization had generally positive experiences with change?	0 to +2	2
2. Has the organization had recent failure experiences with change?	0 to -2	0
3. What is the mood of the organization: upbeat and positive?	0 to +2	2
4. What is the mood of the organization: negative and cynical?	0 to -3	0
5. Does the organization appear to be resting on its laurels?	0 to -3	-1
Executive Support		
6. Are administrators directly involved in sponsoring the change?	0 to +2	2
7. Is there a clear picture of the future?	0 to +3	3
8. Is executive success dependent on the change occurring?	0 to +2	0
9. Are some administrators likely to demonstrate a lack of support?	0 to +3	0
Credible Leadership and Change Champions		
10. Are administrators in the organization trusted?	0 to +3	3
11. Are administrators able to credibly show others how to achieve their collective goals?	0 to +1	1
12. Is the organization able to attract and retain capable and respected change champions?	0 to +2	2
13. Are middle managers able to effectively link senior managers with the rest of the organization?	0 to +1	0
14. Are senior leaders likely to view the proposed change as generally appropriate for the organization?	0 to +2	2
15. Will the proposed change be viewed as needed by the senior leaders?	0 to +2	2
Openness to Change		
16. Does the organization have scanning mechanisms to monitor the internal and external environment?	0 to +2	0
17. Is there a culture of scanning and paying attention to those scans?	0 to +2	0
18. Does the organization have the ability to focus on root causes and recognize interdependencies both inside and outside the organization's boundaries?	0 to +2	0
19. Does "turf" protection exist in the organization that could affect the change?	0 to -3	-1
20. Are administrators or teachers hidebound or locked into the use of past strategies, approaches, and solutions?	0 to -4	-1
21. Are employees able to constructively voice their concerns or support?	0 to +2	1
22. Is conflict dealt with openly, with a focus on resolution?	0 to +2	1
23. Is conflict suppressed and smoothed over?	0 to +2	0

24. Does the organization have a culture that is innovative and encourages innovative activities?	0 to +2	1
25. Does the organization have communications channels that work effectively in all directions?	0 to +2	2
26. Will the proposed change be viewed as generally appropriate for the organization by those not in senior leadership roles?	0 to +2	2
27. Will the proposed change be viewed as needed by those not in senior leadership roles?	0 to +2	2
28. Do those who will be affected believe they have the energy needed to undertake the change?	0 to +2	1
29. Do those who will be affected believe there will be access to sufficient resources to support the change?	0 to +2	1
Rewards for Change		
30. Does the reward system value innovation and change?	0 to +2	1
31. Does the reward system focus exclusively on short-term results?	0 to -2	0
32. Are people censured for attempting change and failing?	0 to -3	0
Measures for Change and Accountability		
33. Are there good measures available for assessing the need for change and tracking progress?	0 to +1	0
34. Does the organization attend to the data that it collects?	0 to +1	1
35. Does the organization measure and evaluate stakeholder satisfaction?	0 to +1	1
36. Is the organization able to carefully steward resources and successfully meet predetermined deadlines?	0 to +1	1

The scores can range from -25 to +50

- The higher the score, the more ready the organization is for change
- If the score is below 10, the organization is not likely ready for change at the present

Note. Adapted from *Organizational change: An action-oriented toolkit* (4th ed.), by G. Deszca, C. Ingols, & T. Cawsey, 2020, Sage Publications Inc.

Appendix C

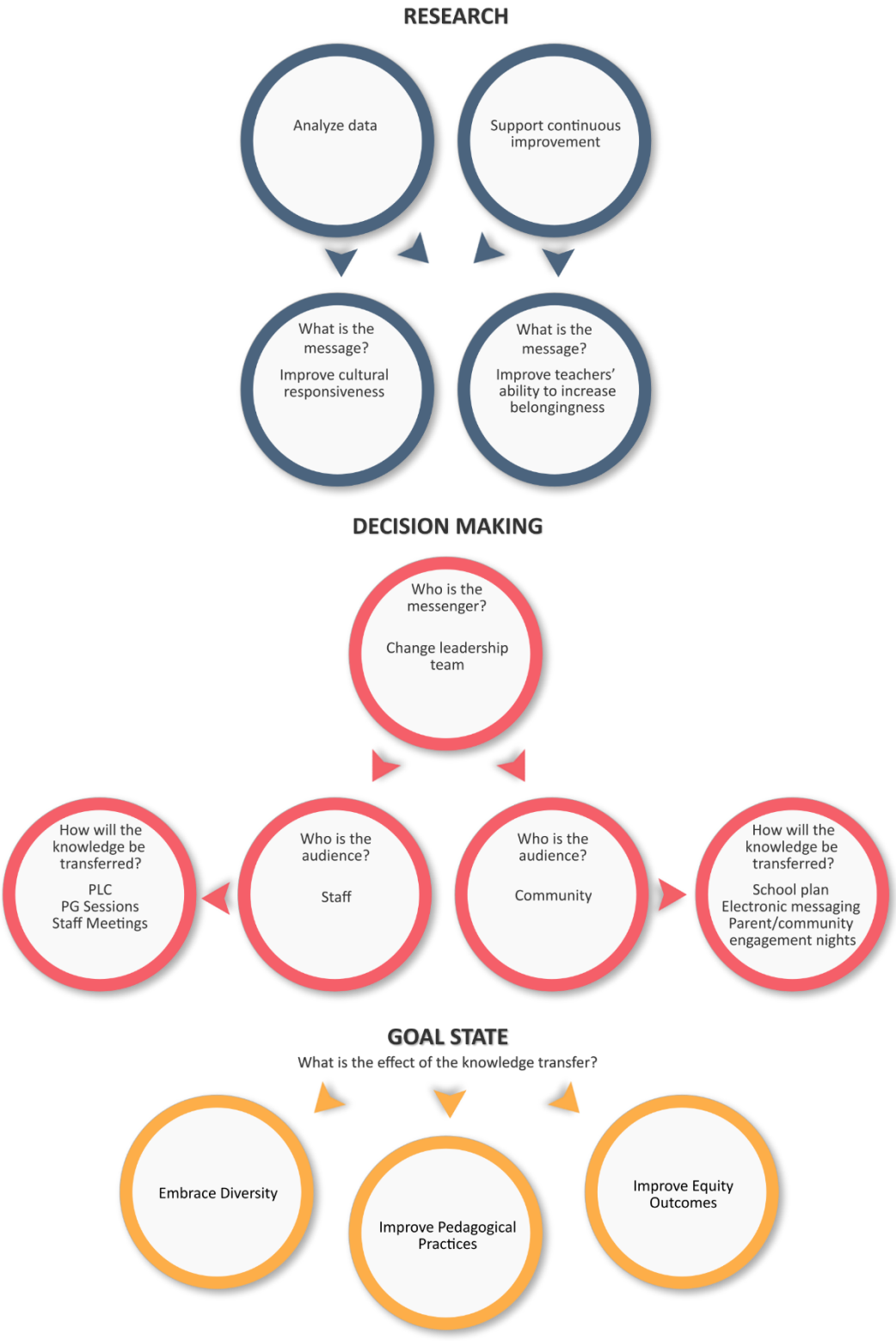
CIP Stages and Timeline

Stage	Implementation Action	Timeline	Strategies
Awakening	Identify a need for change Develop a vision for change through collaborative analysis	1 to 6 months	Assemble change leadership team Gather data Determine vision
Mobilization	Make sense of the change through organizational structures and systems Communicate the need for change Leverage change agent skills Engage and empower staff	6 to 12 months	Meet with leadership team to determine actions for a PLC Organize first meeting Determine the first question about practice Determine short and long term goals Meet with staff to share vision Continue to gather data
Acceleration	Sustain empowerment Build momentum Celebrate small wins	12 to 18 months	Implement PLCs Build capacity of staff individually and collectively Recognize and celebrate progress
Institutionalization	Track the change and make modifications Develop new skills and processes as needed	18-24 months and beyond	Gather feedback from staff and students Meet with leadership team to evaluate progress Continue to build staff capacity Make adjustments to plan as necessary

Note. Adapted from the Change Path Model, Deszca et al., (2020). *Organizational Change: An Action-Oriented Toolkit.* Sage.

Appendix D

Knowledge Mobilization Plan



Appendix E

Communication Strategy

	Phase One: Awakening	Phase Two: Mobilization	Phase Three: Acceleration	Phase Four: Institutionalization
Organizational Objectives	Readying St. Kizito school participants for change	Beginning the process	Building momentum	Reinforcing the change
	Challenging the status quo	Developing momentum	Implementation of PLCs	Embedding the change
			Empower people	
Organizational Activities	Planning the steps for change	Establishing PLCs	Build capacity of teachers	Build capacity of new staff members
	Assembling resources	Monitoring impact	Gathering input from teachers, students, and families	Celebrate and reward successes
	Training the change leaders	Continue to build capacity of change leaders		
	Collecting baseline data on academics and belongingness			
	Gathering input from teachers, students, and families			
Communication Needs	Explaining issues, needs, rationale	Reassuring participants	Informing participants of progress	Publicizing the success of the change
	Identifying and explaining steps for change	Challenging misconceptions	Collecting input from participants	

Note. Adapted from Klein (1996). A management communication strategy for change. *Journal of Change Management, 9*(2), 37.

Appendix F

Student Belonging Questionnaire

Student Questionnaire: A Sense of Belonging

Respond with: 1 = do not agree; 2 = agree; 3 = strongly agree

1. My school is a place where people care about one another.
2. I feel that I really belong in my school and classrooms.
3. My teachers really care about me and are concerned when I am absent.
4. My teachers help me understand what I need to learn and how to be successful in my studies.
5. My school feels like a big happy family.
6. My classrooms feel like happy families.
7. I feel like I am an important part of my classrooms.
8. I feel like I am an important part of my school.
9. My teachers encourage me to join clubs and activities in the school and community.
10. My teachers encourage me to develop my interests and talents.
11. Our school has a large number of clubs and activities that I can participate in.
12. My school encourages me to explore all sorts of career opportunities for after I finish school.
13. I feel like I have a lot of choices in what and how I learn.
14. I feel like everyone at my school encourages me to stay in school, graduate, and go on to college or training.
15. I feel supported and respected in my school and classrooms.