ALIGNING GOALS

(PROVINCE, DISTRICT AND SCHOOL)

TO MAXIMIZE

STUDENTS' SUCCESS

BY: SAYEDA DATOO

In this paper, I will argue that York Region District School Board (YRDSB) has achieved immense results in the area of student achievement (literacy) largely due to three factors. The three factors, in no particular order of importance, are (a) the district literacy goals align closely with the provincial goals, (b) the district focus on the **Literacy Collaborative** and (c) the leadership and change facilitation strategy of 'pressure and support'. I will be drawing my conclusions by closely examining 20 YRDSB schools. Data on these 20 schools has come from anecdotal notes from the **Literacy Fair** (explained below) and the one-page school template description published in *Welcome to the Literacy Learning Fair…an opportunity to share, reflect and celebrate*! (2007). I will end by emphasizing that when the district closely meshes its goals with the ministry, provides job embedded professional development to its staff, and applies 'pressure and support' to the individual schools, then vast and immense results for student success are possible. A general overview / figure showing the interrelationship between the ministry, the district and the school is attached in Appendix A.

Aligning District Goals with Provincial Goals

The Ontario Ministry of Education released a report in 2004 called *Literacy for Learning – the Report of the Expert Panel on Literacy in Grade 4 – 6 in Ontario*. This report opens up with the UNESCO definition of Literacy on page ix. It then sets the foundation and framework for literacy education in grades 4 – 6. The report "grounded in current research that has been verified through classroom practice, offering a vision that all educators across the province may use to promote a whole-school, whole-board

approach to literacy instruction in the Junior Division." (page 1). This policy document

follows two other such documents, gearing towards other age groups such as *Literacy for*

Learning – the Report of the Expert Panel on Early Reading in Ontario, (2003) and *Think*

Literacy Success, Grades 7-12. (2003).

Having attended many (eight) professional development sessions by YRDSB

during the year 2005-2006, I can say with confidence that the district has taken the

ministry expert panel (junior) report seriously and is using it extensively in all its

professional development workshops. In one particular session, we looked at the

document closely, read the fine print, and translated it into what it would look like in the

classroom. YRDSB supported the document with professional development so that the

theory laid out by the ministry was translated into the individual schools in the district.

YRDSB benefited in two ways by aligning its goals with the ministry in 2004. As

noted above, the district was able to take the expert panel report (Gr. 4-6) that outlined

best practices and translated it into professional development for the individual schools.

This was beneficial because teachers in the division were now engaged in new and best

practices that looked at the junior language learner in different roles and perspectives. By

aligning the goals, the district also benefited by receiving thousands of dollars for

resources for the junior learner. Many schools were able to purchase resources that

matched the professional development they were receiving. YRDSB held publisher

displays and recommended resources that could be bought using the junior money

allocated by the ministry. When district and ministry goals matched, a concise and

cohesive message was sent to the teachers through professional development, which in turn affects teaching practices, which in turn affects student achievement in the district.

The YRDSB Literacy Collaborative

The YRDSB *Guidelines for Literacy,* outlines the context of the **Literacy Collaborative (LC)**. It defines the LC as "a learning structure that embraces long-term professional development designed to provide a comprehensive school-wide approach to literacy instruction" (pg.ii). The policy document continues to further highlight the four basic **shared beliefs and understandings,** adopted by YRDSB from Hill & Crevola, 1999. These four beliefs and understandings are:

- All students can achieve high standards given sufficient time and support.

- All teachers can teach to high standards given the right conditions and assistance.

- High expectations and early and ongoing intervention are essential.

- Teachers need to be able to articulate what they do and why they teach the way they do (be theory-and evidence-based rather than trade-based). *(Hill & Crévola 1999 cited in Guidelines for Literacy.* 2007, pg.ii*)*

The policy document then highlights the **goals** of the LC. The main goal is to increase students' literacy achievement by:

- using assessment data for instruction and selection of resources;

- building teacher and administrator capacity in literacy instruction; and

- establishing sustainable, collaborative professional learning communities within and among schools across the district. (Ibid, pg.ii)

The procedure that translates this policy into practice is that a school literacy team made of an administrator, literacy teacher, and special education resource teacher (SERT) attend and receive professional development (Change Management and Content) sessions several times a year. The professional development is provided by 'education guru's' from the Ontario Institute of Studies in Education (OISE/UT) and by curriculum consultants. The idea is that the core literacy team will learn about best practices, change theory, and will discuss strategies on how to facilitate the learning back to their schools. The organization of the LC also ensures that all district goals are translated and aligned with the individual schools. At the LC, the literacy team makes a commitment to the above three goals of the collaborative and ensures that their individual schools take up initiatives and programs that will enable them to achieve those goals.

Another aspect of the LC, and not a new one, is the focus on action research. Action research is a self-directed inquiry and uniquely specific to each school. The tool is often used to assess and evaluate the degree to which innovations implemented at the school are having an impact on student achievement. The process starts with a question, followed by a change in teaching practice, then the collection and analysis of data, to help conclude if the change in teaching practice had an impact on student achievement. In YRDSB, action research was mandated to be practiced in all intensive support schools. Intensive support schools are defined as those schools that have a high percentage of

students who, for whatever reasons, are achieving results below ministry standards. The fact that action research is mandated in these schools implies that pressure (by the district) is applied for (a) trying new initiatives and (b) collecting data to check if the initiatives are making a difference in student achievement.

The YRDSB Literacy Fair

The literacy learning fair is an end of the year celebration that showcases the work done by schools in the quest to achieve the three goals set out by the LC. The learning fair is the culmination of the literacy team's professional development for the year and an opportunity for them to showcase how theory changed into practice in their respective schools. During the fair, each school shares the plan of action they took for the year, their successes, their challenges and their next steps. The fair is set up such that each school is able to hear the showcase presentations of at least 4 other schools. The inherent goal with the literacy fair is to develop, enhance and promote a professional learning community within the district. As an expectation of the literacy fair, each school is asked to submit a report on a common template that is published as a handout and shared with all schools in the district.

The Results (Leadership and Change in relation to the LC in YRDSB)

The YRDSB Literacy Fair was held on June 12th and 14th , 2007. The results and generalizations that will be shared in this paper come from anecdotal notes (raw data

presented in Appendix B) collected by a team of 5 teachers at the literacy fair. These 5

teachers attended a total of 20 school presentations, consisting of both the elementary and

secondary panels. The focus of the anecdotal comments was on (a) leadership style

adopted by the schools and (b) how change was facilitated in the schools. The following

generalizations and synopsis comes from a concept map (Appendix C) created by the

team of 5 teachers.

(A) Leadership Style

It was clearly evident from all presentations, that leadership was being shared

between teachers and administrators. In particular, the sharing was mostly happening

between the literacy teacher and the administrator. The former held instructional

capacity, which was the avenue of influence to the rest of the school staff. This practice

is consistent with Crowther, Kaagen, Ferguson, & Hann's (2002) distinction between

instructional capacity and strategic capacity (cited in York-Barr and Duke, 2004).

Crowther et al (2002) suggests that the principal assumes responsibility for strategic

leadership such as the school vision, aligning resources and networking, while the teacher

assumes responsibility for the instructional leadership (pg. 262). In fact this was exactly

what we saw in most of the presentations. The literacy teacher was the presenter, while

the administrator facilitated and added onto the discussions as needed.

When one looks at the role of the literacy teacher, one is tempted to assume that

the literacy teacher holds positional power. She is able to exert influence to the rest of

the staff due to the instructional power given to her by the formal position. Given this role in isolation, it would be likened to a managerial style of leadership as described by Leithwood, Jantzi & Steinbach (1999). They describe a managerial style of leadership as one that is focused on functions, tasks or behaviours, where influence is exerted by formal position in a hierarchy (pg. 14). The literacy teacher in this case is focused on the task of influencing her staff members to implement initiatives set out by the LC. However, it would be erroneous to look at the role of the literacy teacher in isolation. Rather, one needs to examine an organization closely to see if it has established a professional learning community (PLC). It is important to emphasize at this point that the third goal of the LC is to 'establish sustainable, collaborative professional learning communities within and among schools across the district'. From the raw data collected by our team, we would conclude that many schools in the elementary panel have implemented the practice of PLC's within their schools, but only a few have done so in the secondary panel. From the elementary schools that have established PLC's, I am inclined to believe that most of them are categorized as 'intensive support'. Because 'intensive support' schools have a greater need, the district channels more resources, both monetary and human, their way to ensure the success of students in those schools. I believe that because of the 'extra' funds, these schools are able to purchase time for the teachers to meet in professional learning communities. Our findings during the literacy fair are consistent with this conclusion.

The establishment of a PLC is critical when one wants to analyze if an organization is functioning as a traditional bureaucracy or as a professional organization.

Hall (1962) outlines an interesting typology of school organizational structure depicted in Figure 1. (cited in Hoy & Miskel, pg, 61, 1996). Hall (1962) describes an authoritarian structure (low professional, high bureaucratic) as one in which "authority is based on position and hierarchy…Power is concentrated and flows from top to bottom. Rules and procedures are impersonally applied…the superior always has the last say" (pg. 61).

Figure 1

	Professional Pattern		
		High	Low
Bureaucratic	High	Weberian	Authoritarian
Pattern	Low	Professional	Chaotic

A professional structure (high professional, low bureaucratic) is "one in which substantial decision making is delegated to the professional staff. Members of the staff are viewed as professionals who have the expertise and competence to make important organizational decisions" (pg. 62). Given these definitions, we can conclude that schools that have a professional learning team in place have an avenue where teachers are engaged in collaborative decision making processes. As described above, we noted that not all schools, especially ones in the secondary panel, were at the professional structure state as defined by Hall (1962). I would assume it would be YRDSB's goal to have all schools operating as professional structures.

The establishment of PLC's is also the reason why many YRDSB schools have developed a shift in the leadership style. From our research, many schools highlighted a transformative style of leadership in their organizations. Leithwood et al (1999) define the critical focus of transformative leadership as the commitment and capacity of the members in an organization. The influence in the organization happens not due to position, but due to the collective aspiration of the organization (pg. 9). To adopt this style of leadership would only prove the establishment of PLC's. It is in the PLC meetings that teachers collaborate together and make decisions that impact themselves and the students at the school. Many schools highlighted the use of dotmocracy as a strategy used to involve all staff in the selection of the parameter of focus for the school. However, only some schools indicated that the staff met in smaller communities to discuss goals and actions for the school.

(B) Change Facilitation

Change in YRDSB unfolded as described by Fullan's (1996) Triple I model (cited in Rolheiser, Quinn & Fullan, overhead #24). The model states that change evolves over time on a continuum. Schools would start off at the initiation phase characterized by some degree of 'buy in'. The implementation phase follows, characterized by 'pressure and support', and finally the institutionalization phase is characterized by embedding and widespread use (pg.93). Our team observed that with the LC, some schools were in the initiating phase (e.g. trying new initiatives such as literacy and the arts), many were in the implementing phase (e.g. had tried a new initiative, and were now analyzing data to

realize impact) and a few were heading towards the institutionalizing phase (e.g. digging deeper and sustaining their focus in literacy). This conclusion follows well with the Triple I model, since the LC initiative has been in its 3rd year. Given this onset, it is acceptable for most schools to be in the implementation and institutionalization phases. However, it was surprising to note that there were still some schools that were in the initiating phase!

An interesting observation made by the team was the fact that all schools that were identified as 'intensive support' were either in the implementing phase or institutionalization phase. These schools were well on their way to achieving the 3 goals set out by the LC, namely using data to drive instruction, building teacher and administrator capacity and establishing professional learning communities. On a closer look, this is not surprising because YRDSB supports intensive schools with resources and mandates them to participate in 'action research'. As mentioned above, action research is unique and specific to each school. It looks at initiatives implemented in the school, and their direct impact through data to student achievement. I believe that due to the mandate of action research and the accompanied support, enables intensive support schools to meet all the goals of the LC.

Fullan (2003) states 'you can't get large-scale reform through bottom-up strategies – but beware of the trap'. He continues to elaborate that if one wants a fundamental change, then it has to be large scale. However, he cautions that you also need ownership for the change. He advices that one can get away with top-down

leadership under two conditions: (1) if it turns out you have a good idea (informed prescription) and (2) if you invest in capacity building (and empowerment) from day one pg. 32).   The LC is a fine idea and has worked successfully in the States. Scharer, Desai, Williams & Pinnell (2003) report that the LC in the States began in 1993 with 9 schools participating in 3 districts. By the year 2002-2003, more than 590 schools in 200 districts and 26 different states were engaged in the LC (pg.2). Because of the wide success and its result in student achievement, it was adopted in Ontario. The change management and content sessions are a way of building capacity and are empowering for the teachers in attendance. For the rest of the staff, the PLC's are the vehicle to build empowerment. When all this is put in place, large scale reform in YRDSB is definitely possible!

Conclusion

The LC has been a huge success largely because of three factors, namely (a) the district literacy goals align closely with the provincial goals, (b) the district focus on the Literacy Collaborative and (c) the leadership and change facilitation strategy of 'pressure and support'. When the district literacy goals lined up with the ministry, we were able to take advantage of some valuable print and monetary resources. The LC focus and its inherent three goals, forces schools (especially intensive support) to adopt change initiatives in their schools and to report back at the literacy fair. The strategy of 'pressure and support' is used in multiple occasions by YRDSB. For e.g. intensive support schools are pressured to adopt action research and are given the necessary resources to do that. All schools in YRDSB are expected to meet the goals of the LC, and have to report their

successes and challenges back at the literacy fair. These strategies are 'pressure and support' strategies that enable large-scale reform to happen. However, with PLC's in place, staff members are able to be empowered by engaging in collaborative decision making processes. Putting all the pieces of the puzzle together, the literacy collaborative has been able to successfully reform education in YRDSB.

Appendix A

Province
Policy Document
Literacy & Numeracy Secretariat

Student
Success
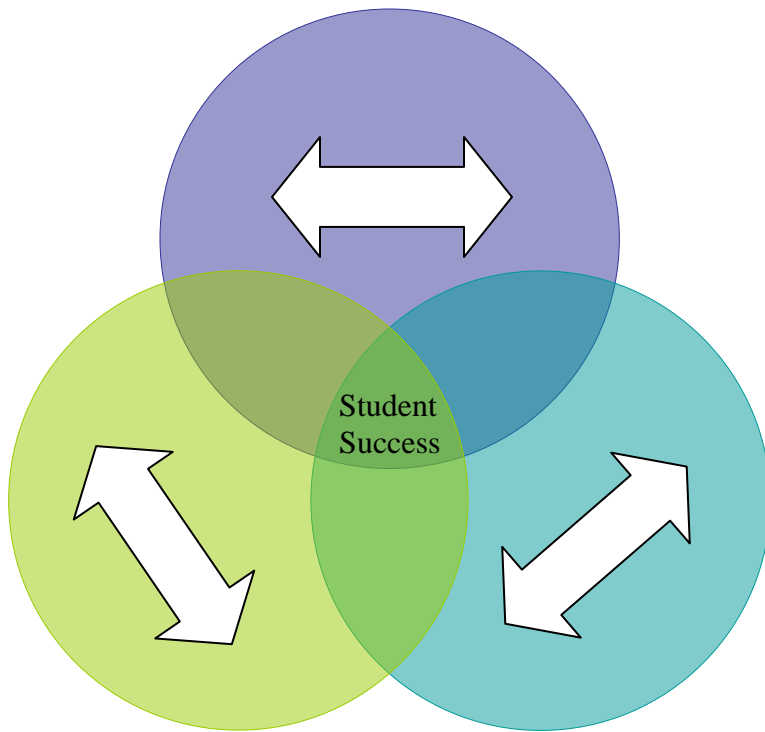
District

The **Literacy Collaborative**
13 Parameters

School

School Plan for Continuous
Improvement

Appendix B

Literacy Collaborative Raw Data:

School A:

- Principal been at the school for 7 years now, considers school at a sustainable stage.
- Implementing balanced literacy and is a Tribes trained school
- Case management approach – monitor at-risk students, have grade team meetings. Monitor PM Benchmarks and DRA, have a literacy folder for all children, it contains strategies and focus areas for each student, have a tracking wall, accessed regularly in staff meetings, booster groups
- Have a professional learning community, use C1 and bank days for grade partner meetings, conduct literacy PD, have a fish philosophy – fish bowl, golden fish award
- Has Literacy teacher networks
- Goals for next year – to have literacy committee to meet for 40 min. a week for grade partners. Will have for e.g. grade 5 and gr. 1 classes combined. Gr. 5 students given a lesson plan to conduct with the grade 1 students. One teacher released to meet with literacy teacher to follow up on student's literacy folder – a case management approach
- Challenges – time, creating a vision

School B:

- Building teacher capacity
- Share shops – concept idea – the teacher hosts the PD
- Grade group meetings – case management approach
- Collaborative marking time
- Building community capacity – 2x a week – community utilizes resources for library, teachers teach workshops for parents on how to help weak readers, internet/safety, Literacy nights - showing of videos – e.g. DO's and DON'Ts of reading with children at home. Junior/Intermediate Literacy night – help children with organization / textbooks, etc.
- Reaching out to Agencies
- Parent reaching out Grant
- Storytelling – done in Tamil and Hindi, stories from parent to child is written down and published, Rukhsana Khan

School C:

- Shared Beliefs (Breakthrough)
- Staff collaboration, student achievement and parent involvement – a hands on approach
- Goal – engagement in writing (literacy through the arts)
- Lunches – share shops with writing
- 6 traits + 1 of writing
- Media literacy – called in Heather Miller for a number of workshops on PD days

- Funding for the art supplies came from school council – each class got $200.00. Had a publishing house – each student had a book published
- Art examples – triorama

School D:

- Balanced Literacy – 100 minutes
- SPCI – tracking wall electronically
- Literacy through the arts
- Community engagement
- Innovation fund – J/I
- 3 PD sessions
- Triad of 3 schools
- Each school is getting their 'feet wet' and then consolidating and then digging deeper
- Shared reading – attach with a lesson plan, chances are it will be used.
- Parent survey – found out what they want – they want to come into the classroom to see their children interact with their peers.
- Shared data during the presentation

School E:

- Shared Beliefs and understanding – SPCI on balanced literacy
- Staff meetings with 40 min. on literacy PD, followed into divisional meetings
- Professional Learning Team – meet 4 times a year for 100 minutes. Funding provided by school council., literacy teacher mentors and coaches staff.
- Conducts Action Research
- Case management approach – collaborative scoring methods, tracking wall, PM Benchmarks, DRA, CASI
- Reader's Notebook – k-8 book shared with admin, samples shared at staff meetings.
- Early intervention program, reading recovery, booster groups
- Challenges – differentiate PD, time for grade partners to meet, common prep for grade partners
- Continue with all and dig deeper to attain sustainability.

School F:

- -opened in 1987
- -performance plus
- -intensive support
- -700 students aprox
- -culturally diverse
- -high ELL: primary languages Tamil, Chinese, Hindi, Farsi
- -involved in literacy collaborative for 5 years
- -initial focus: primary
- -2 years ago, focus junior
- -expanded to intermediate this year

- -focus on comprehension strategies
- -Utilized EQAO date to highlight needs which were:
- Making inferences
- Reading independently using a variety of strategies
- Use knowledge of word origins and derivations to determine meaning of unfamiliar words
- -literacy teachers and consultants reviewed data for patterns &cross divisional work among staff during PD to determine strengths, needs & next steps for school with a focus on increased student achievement revealed:
- Students have limited background knowledge
- Looked at Marzano's work and recognized that all students had background knowledge that was general but wasn't helping with school. What was needed was more academic background knowledge
- Students were having trouble with the comprehension strategies that required higher level thinking (inferencing)
- Literacy teachers found research which supported the idea that developing vocabulary would increase academic background knowledge and improve reading comprehension
- -School Wide focus was determined:
- Providing students with vocabulary acquisition strategies
- Integrated into 4 parameters
  - Shared beliefs and understanding
    - Surveys
    - Staff book studies (<u>Words, Words, Words</u> & <u>For the Love of Words</u>)
    - Modeled lessons (involving a gradual release of responsibility)
    - Intermediate unit planning
    - Book Clubs
    - Battle of the Books
  - Case Management approach
    - PM Benchmark and DRA
    - Tracking Boards
    - Divisional Areas of Focus
- Primary Focus: literal comprehension
  - Strategy: retelling
- Junior Focus: metacognitive awareness
  Strategy: talking and writing about thinking
- Intermediate Focus: literal comprehension/interpretation
  - Approaches: modeling/shared writing
  - Strategies: think aloud/think-pair share
    - Junior Resources
    - Strategy bookmarks/metacognition strategies
    - Collaborative DRA marking and analysis
  - Action research
    - 1 class from each grade was involved in the project and worked on developing Vocabulary strategies, utilized graphic organizers
  - Parental involvement
    - Literacy night
    - Dual language books and resources
    - Translated bookmarks
    - At home reading programme
    - Parent volunteers encouraged

-Next Steps
- Building teacher capacity

- Collaboration;
    - provide teachers new opportunities esp. with specialty teachers
    - Continued work with literacy consultant
    - Involvement of lead teachers in literacy meetings with consultant
- Data Analysis
    - Developing better strategies for monitoring & analyzing student progress
    - Explore the use of electronic tracking boards and tracking systems for use by individual classroom teachers
- Literacy in the content areas
    - Enhancing our implementation of literacy strategies across content areas
    - Continuing to help classroom teachers provide accommodations and modifications for ELL and Spec.Ed students

School G:

-recognized that Intermediate division wasn't succeeding/having difficulty learning
-made this focal area
-utilized a student survey in Jan (new Principal came to school in Jan) to better meet student needs
-Common Theme in Survey: Students felt peers influenced them negatively; wanted teachers to be more firm
-Result: Improved attitudes, took away study hall, students had to be more responsible for their work
-DREAMCATCHERS THEME was utilized to help reach the intermediate students through their dreams and goals
- Dream catcher assignment (decorating a box w/ symbols to represent their dreams, choosing objects to put in their box, writing about their hopes and dreams, one academic goal)
- Attempted to hear students' voices and engage students
-Started with DATA
- Teachers learned to use DRA (supported @ beginning of yr, now all teachers able to do June testing alone)
- Used DRA info to determine needs and desires -> lessons were drawn from DRA results using Think Literacy Document Teachers learned different approaches to utilize
- Activities were cross-curricular:
    - literacy thru the arts: write about art, explain choices, strengths, weaknesses
    - Computers: Read about File sharing which is illegal, discussed opinions, wrote about pros and cons: found drawing conclusions to be a weakness
- Took rubrics from DRA: tried to apply to activities students could relate to
-BOOK STUDY utilized with staff: Think Literacy Document, Using DRA data, (focused on developing metacognitive awareness)
-RESULT-improved division competency with DRA
-increased awareness of literacy needs of students
-shared language among staff and students
-more frequent, structured divisional dialogue
-fewer referrals to office re: intermediate behavior
-increased student engagement
-DRA results: fewer students were found at Level 2 or below
-NEXT STEPS-challenges the "wolves"
- time to meet and discuss
- resources: high interest, lower level texts
- differentiated learning among staff
- different levels of participation
- develop tracking boards
- continued reading groups
- increased grade/partner collaboration

-ROLE OF LEADERSHIP
- principal supports staff PD on instructional intelligence, Tribes
- she tries to balance "pressure and support" thinking of creative ways to get team to work together
- principal responded to the student surveys, came into class, told the students what changes would be in place based on their surveys (teachers were able to use student ideas to remind them of what they said they wanted)
- consolidated timetable
- more frequent divisional meetings (discussion still often occurs "on the fly")
- built in time for PD during staff meetings
- PA day
- Literacy teachers providing support within the classrooms

School H:

-Paramters were picked by whole school
-@ Literacy Collaboarative lots of staff were given opportunities to attend which helped bring more people on-board
-Focuses:
1. Case Management Approach
   –used data to recognize needs
   -Who is at risk? Using tracking walls
   -used wide array of assessment tools
   -last year used a Virtual Wall: presented difficulties (only literacy teacher had access)
   -P/J using Guided Reading Groups (Reading Recovery/Fountas and SuPinnel)
   -movement of students occurred at divisional meetings
   -teachers shared ideas about what was working and what was not working
   -Divisional meetings monthly instead of staff meetings at times
2. Cross-Curricular Themes
   -build through math/social studies/science
3. Differentiated Instruction
   -book room (recognized the need to include more intermediate, non-fiction, more high interest/low vocab. Books, books that capture boys' interests
   -one book study took place on-line
   -teachers were assigned to present chapts on-line
   -problem: sustainability
   -another live book study took place but participation dropped off
   -question: how do we sustain? Try shorter? More intense?
4. Community Awareness through Literacy Carousel Night
   -arranged by student council
   -booths from community
   -teachers presented on various topics including: media literacy, hooking boys on reading, metacognitive strategies in layman's terms, interpreting reports, interpreting rubrics, comprehension scores vs. oral reading scores
   -very poor turnout
   -will try again @ beginning of the year
   -will try to reach ESL families w/ bilingual handout
-Challenges:
1. "Buy-in", notice Intermediate Teachers are committed but through a different way
   - Hard to get to utilize tracking board
   - Hard to make time to discuss literacy, other things always seem to take precedence

- Getting Intermediates to engage in Guided Reading and utilize differentiated instruction
- Sorting out question: Which is 1st? Change in behavior or Change in belief -> maybe a change in behavior can come first and affect beliefs?
  2. Bridging Grade 3 and 4
    - Can go lower in grade 4 for at-risk kids and have meaningful info

-Next Steps:
- Look at what we want: IMPROVED STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT
- To support Intermediate Teachers, find out where Intermediates are going and join in, Teachers don't have a lot of time for something that won't give them "bang for their buck"
- Build on positives i.e. science, history, geography each in their own term, Intermediates were really focused, very positive result, less transition time, worked well b/c they had over 200 7/8's

School I:

-principal presented all info
-2 teachers also attended, one operated powerpoint, both added in at times or answered questions
-principal:
- ensured that resources were dedicated to literacy
- got $ to have staff trained in Tribes
- chose to share PD opportunities thru literacy collaborative among many staff members and felt this got more people on board and excited

-Goals over the last few years since current principal began at the school:
  1. Get more volunteers in the school (was successful)
  2. Recruit more male staff members to help encourage boys to read (in the last few years, more principals have been hired)
  3. Acquire more funding (was successful in getting School Council to raise enough $ to have all staff Tribes trained)
  4. Obtain a better understanding of Community Needs
     - Sent out a survey and tried to provide incentives to get high levels of compliance (got School Council to donate a variety of prizes)
     - Obtained a 66% response rate
     - Learned that the parents wanted to know more about the school plan, build school culture
       - lead to Tribes training to build school community, school-wide focus
       - created opportunities for parents to learn about the curriculum
  5. Wanted to increase library book circulation (have added 2500+ books since Sept.)

-DATA UTILIZED
- PM Benchmarks in Primary, DRA in Junior
- 1st year with Intermediates doing DRA

-JOB EMBEDDED LITERACY DEVELOPMENT
- Utilized Feb. PA day to focus on Interactive Word Walls (several teachers modeled for groups) A good resource: Making Word Walls Work

School J:

-largest elementary school in the board
-many students stage 3 and 4 ELL
-positive home environment for many students
-working to build parent involvement; often cultural challenges, parents lack the ability to connect to the school
-large staff (60)
-Principal

- Has an open-door policy, ready to provide support
- Mobilized resources for literacy

-developed a targeted literacy planner
-last few years working first on small steps; getting everyone "on-board" & student engagement
- Dealt with resistance to use of DRA and PM Benchmark

-began utilizing Green Folders to track students progress, includes cards that detail if student has been taken to team, ELL, prolonged absences
-Book room has been built up over the last few years and is now very strong ->now want to build classroom libraries
-ANALYSIS OF EQAO DATA
- Literal word comprehension and decoding strong
- Making connections, inferencing and interpretive questions weak
- Lead to focus this year on Questioning, Inferring & Making Connections

-CASE MANAGEMENT APPROACH
- Used digital data boards (allows sorting and Data Manipulation)
- Provided on site PM Benchmark and DRA training ->helped to engage staff by providing some of the time they needed

-DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION
- Intermediate classroom focus

-ACTION RESEARCH
- Collaborative, team building, marking together
- Lesson Study – work together to build lesson
- A few students were followed over the year
- Collected data at beginning of yr
- Included survey of interests
- Looked at Language Curriculum; focused on Gr. 2 retell, relay, reflect
- Created a rubric gr. 1-8
- Used student friendly language
- Found that connections students made were surface: ie could identify theme not "message"
- Students needed to look at implicit messages and feelings
- Worked on a variety of instructional approaches with all students:
  o "thick and thin" questions
  o Making Connections (text->text; text->self)
  o Asking questions
  o Summarizing
  o Used exemplars with students; students were asked to identify levels and produce questions
  o FQR (fact, question, response)
  o Used acting to connect with feeling: ie.'blurting bubbles' of comics, graphic novels
 o Classroom board "what's the BIG idea" in various books

-COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT
- Last year: Mystery Night (Harrisberg)
- This year: Environmental Theme (focus: non-fiction)
- Student Carousel: sharing work, making it meaningful

Main

- YRDSB Literacy Collaborative
  - *<creates>* Change
    - *<shows>* Phases
      - *<of Fullan's>* Triple I Model
        - *<some>* Initiate
        - *<many>* Implementing
        - *<few>* Institutionalizing
  - *<is>* Impeded
    - *<by>* Leadership
      - *<shows>* Style
        - *<can be>* Managerial
          - *<Leithwood / Jantzi / Steinbach>* Transformational
            - Effects
              - *<Silva, Gimbert / Nolan's>* 3 Waves
                - *<many>* Staff Developers and Mentors
                - *<few>* Culture of Collaboration
          - *<might be>* Formal Roles
          - *<work towards>* Improvement
            - *<in Mascall>* Build Capacity
        - Formal / Informal roles
          - *<to promote>* vision
          - *<as>* encouragers
        - *<work towards>* Goals
    - *<is>* Shared
      - *<between>* Administrators
        - Enabled
          - *<through>* School Distributive Leadership
          - *<using>* Policy Reforms
            - *<affected by>* Values Systems
              - Economic Cycles
              - Social & Organizational Context
          - *<by>* Beliefs
            - Resources
              - *<improve>* Classroom Practice
                - *<increases>* Modelling
                - *<builds>* Expertise
                - *< objectivity creates>* Deep Meaning
                - *<encourages>* Dialogue
            - *<hindered by>* Subjectivity
              - *<via>* Teaching Gap & Classroom Press
            - *<create>* Synergy (Mascall / Rolheiser)
              - *<increases>* District Policy and Practice
      - *<with>* Teachers
        - *<have>* Instructional capacity
          - *<(Crowther et al. in York-Barr and Duke)>* Strategic capacity
    - *<by Pacchter's>* Gendered Power / Knowledge Relations
      - *<dissatisfied>* Subject Specialists
  - *<in>* Evidence
    - *<using>* Data
      - *<quantitative>* Improved test scores
      - *<qualitative>* Improved attitudes
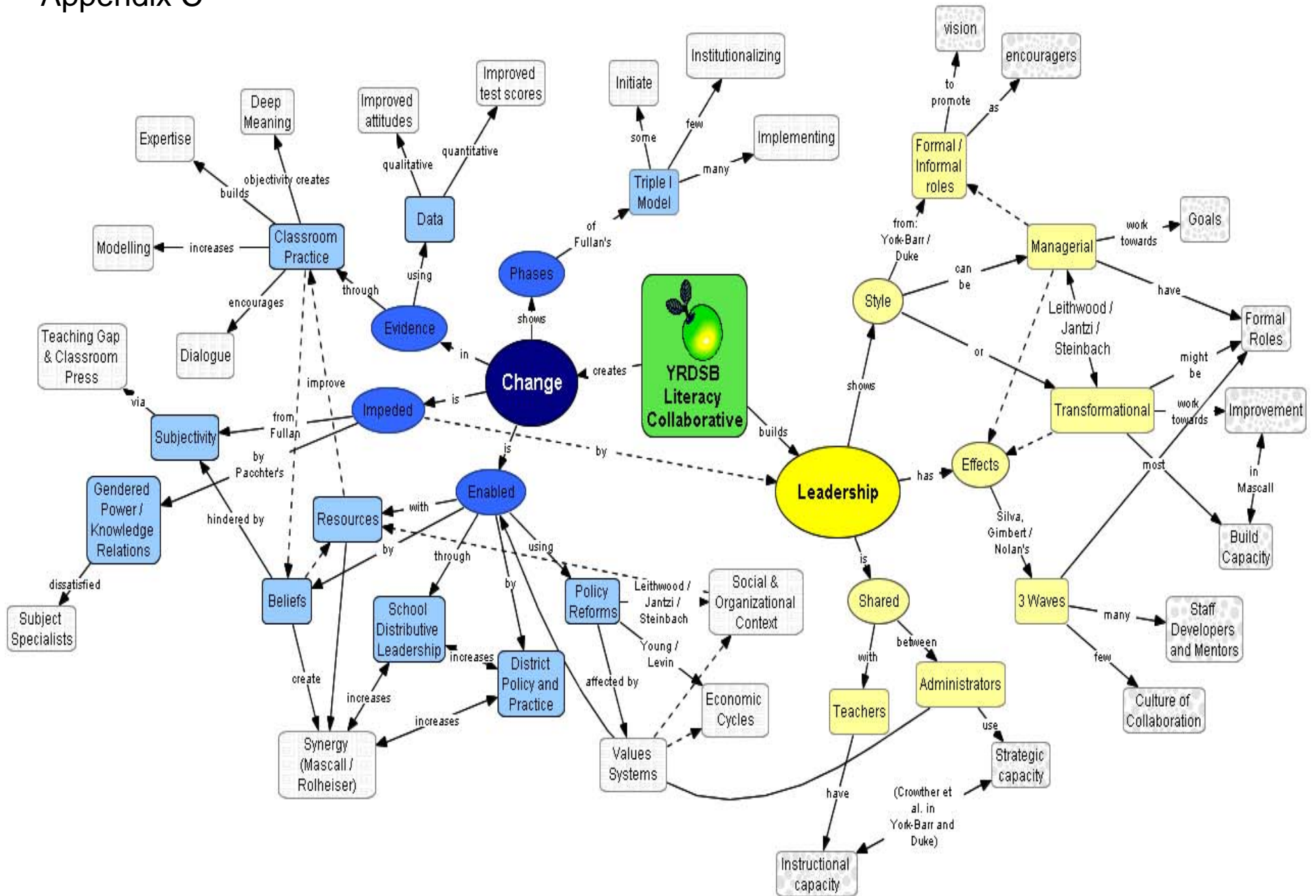
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