

Managing education change



This presentation has several parts

1. Identifying school culture
2. The changes – what education reform means
3. Change as a process – managing education change
4. The improvement/change cycle
5. Strategies for managing change – Professional learning teams




Part 1: Identifying school culture



Session outcomes

Participants can:

- identify and describe aspects of school culture
- Identify characteristics of ‘best practice’ schools

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- *“Transforming culture - changing what people in the organization value and how they work together to accomplish it - leads to deep, lasting change.”*

Fullan, M: (2002)



What is school culture?

- School culture is the beliefs and expectations that guide the way things are done in a school, particularly in reference to how people relate (or fail to relate) to each other.



- School culture develops over time through the values and traditions established and supported by the past and current teachers and students and community members.



Activity 1 – identifying school culture

1. Reflect on the culture of your school for a few minutes.
2. Identify three positive things about your school, and three problems that impact on staff and student morale.
3. Record these in your note book for use later in the workshop



Activity 2 – the impact of school culture

1. Read Scenario 1 carefully
2. Identify practices and issues at Nanai HS that will inhibit implementation of new curriculum
3. Highlight any issues and practices that also apply in your school



The culture of a school is exhibited through:

- The observed behavior of teachers – for example how teachers interact in the staff room, the language they use, the rituals they establish eg how beginning teachers are treated



The culture of a school is exhibited through:

- What teachers usually do in terms of lesson planning, teaching or monitoring the progress of students.
- What students usually do in terms of classroom learning and other behaviour



The culture of a school is exhibited through:

- The philosophy that guides the approach to teaching and learning of particular subjects in a school.
- Administrative procedures and expectations eg how decisions are made, what penalties are applied



- The issue of school culture must be addressed if school improvement initiatives and reform curriculum implementation are to succeed



How do we learn about school culture?

- The most effective way to learn about a school culture is through the collection of data.
- This can be done by observation and/or measurement (eg what is happening in the classroom, how well do our students perform in relation to others)



How do we learn about school culture?

Some questions we might ask include:

- who are the most important teachers/students the school, and why?
- why was the school built?
- what are some significant past events ?
- what ceremonies or rituals receive the most attention, and why?
- which community members influence the school, and how?



How do we learn about school culture?

- By collecting data and rating variables such as:
 - student achievement
 - collegial awareness
 - decision-making
 - shared values
 - parent and community relations
 - leadership




- School leaders and teachers can identify and reduce the impact of behaviors and practices that inhibit positive progress
- School leaders and teachers can identify the behaviors and practices that will facilitate school improvement initiatives and reform curriculum implementation



Activity 3

- You have reflected on your own school and read about Nanai HS. Now think about the characteristics of an ‘ideal’ school – the school you would love to teach in
- Share your ideas about an ‘ideal’ school in a group brainstorm

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- *“To accomplish lasting reform, we need leaders who can create a fundamental transformation in the learning cultures of schools and of the teaching profession itself.”*

Fullan, M: (2002)



Part 2:

The changes – what education reform means



Session outcome

- Participants can analyse the impact of education changes on their own practice



The changes

To implement the reform, secondary administrators and teachers will have to change

- their practices and behaviour
- their beliefs and understanding



The changes

Lower secondary curriculum reform means

- new syllabus documents
- new subjects/units
- new assessment policies and practice
- new strategies for teaching and monitoring learning
- different timetabling and subject allocations



The work of teachers

The work of teachers has changed as a result of the reform. The new curriculum requires a focus on :

- Subject and unit learning outcomes
- Varied assessment strategies
- Student-centred teaching and learning approaches
- Relevant content
- A range of resources
- Inclusive teaching practices
- Cultural relevance



Activity 4

Look back over the list in the previous slide

- What will you have to do differently if you are going to include each of these in your practice?



Activity 5

Lower secondary curriculum reform will also bring changes in community roles and reactions.

What reaction do you expect from the local community for each of the changes listed on Slide 23?



Part 3:

Change as a process



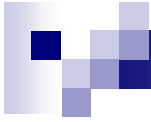
Activity 6

- Choose a partner and take five minutes each to describe a major change you have made in your life.
- Explain why you made the change, how you felt at the time, what obstacles you faced and how you felt afterwards



Change management

Introducing a change as important as implementing the lower secondary reform curriculum is complex because **change is** not an event but **a process** which occurs over time.



- You are a change agent or a manager of change.
- You will be leading the reform process in your school.



Leading change

People need to know "what" the change is and "why" it is being implemented, before you can talk about "how" to implement the change.



Leading change

Clear communication is the key. You must tell other teachers, parents and the community about the change and how the change will affect them. You must tell the **frequently** and **in different ways**.



Research findings

A great deal of research has been undertaken on change management. Following are some of the key findings of this research.



Managing change

Change is a complex process that requires thoughtful planning.

You can facilitate change in your school by planning **small steps at a time.**



Managing change

Change is a complex process that requires thoughtful planning.

You can facilitate change in your school by deciding which strategies and activities will most likely achieve **positive results.**



Managing change

All change creates feelings of anxiety in the people who have to implement the change.

You can help by reassuring them and demonstrating that change is manageable.



Managing change

The change process is unpredictable even if it has been planned carefully.

You will have to monitor the situation closely, and be prepared to make adjustments.



Managing change

Things
sometimes get
worse before
they get better.

You must
recognise and
acknowledge the
small successes,
and encourage
people to keep
trying.



Managing change

Effective and long lasting change takes time and persistence.

By reviewing and consolidating plans and progress made, you will encourage teachers not to give up.



Managing change

Doing creates understanding. People need to change their practices and actions before they will change their beliefs and attitudes.

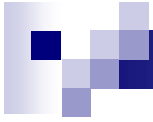
You can encourage teachers to change by highlighting examples of successful change.



Managing change

Change is more likely to happen if small but important steps are taken in introducing new ideas and practices.

Keep your plans realistic and take one step at a time. Make sure you have the leadership, knowledge and resources to proceed.



Part 4:

The improvement/change cycle



The improvement/change cycle

- Phase 1: **Plan**
- Phase 2: **Trial**
- Phase 3: **Study**
- Phase 4: **Implement**



The improvement/change cycle

Phase 1: **Plan**


- Select or form change/learning team(s),
- Decide where to focus your improvement effort
- Build commitment in the team
- Dedicate resources to your improvement effort
(eg time, people, funds)
- Discuss approach, values, and methods
- Brainstorm and plan actions



The improvement/change cycle

Phase 2: **Trial**

- Trial proposed actions or solutions - for example, all teachers in subject area plan and try a new assessment strategy for one term



The improvement/change cycle

Phase 3: **Study**

- Collect data and information and analyse and discuss the results of the trial.
- Highlight the successes.



The improvement/change cycle

Phase 4: **Implement**

- Implement the successful aspects of the trial more widely.
- Document lessons learned and recommendations for future action
- Establish a way of continuously collecting feedback to maintain improvements.
- Return to the **plan phase** to select the next opportunity for change and improvement



Activity 7

- Read the two action research examples and answer these questions
 - Who is the researcher?
 - What was the purpose?
 - Who chose the topic for research?
 - Who chose the starting point?
 - Who chose the data gathering process?
 - Who interpreted information collected?
 - Is it manageable?
 - Were outsiders involved?



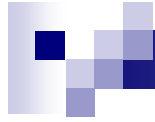
Action research

- Action research (AR) is the **process** by which **practitioners** attempt to study **their work-related problems** in a **scientific manner** in order to **improve their workplace and their work practices**.
- AR is a formal way of working through the change/improvement cycle



Activity 8

- Examine the list of issues, practices identified at Nanai HS in Scenario 1.
- Identify one area where action research might help staff find a solution



Part 5:

Managing change – The professional learning team



Activity 9

- Reflection – take a few minutes to make some notes on the following
 - What teams/groups have you been part of this year?
 - What do you like about working in teams/groups?
 - What don't you like about working in teams/groups?



Activity 9 (Continued)

- Sharing ideas

- Now share your notes with three or four other participants and make a list of the characteristics of an effective team/group



Why professional learning teams?

Many challenges face those in schools who are attempting to implement a cultural and structural change such as the lower secondary reform curriculum.



These challenges include:

- Too many workplace tasks and requirements
- Difficulty in implementing changes that impact directly on the practice of learning and teaching
- Rethinking the usual and comfortable



Professional learning teams

Professional learning teams are a way to:

- address these challenges;
- create collaborative cultures; and
- deliver significant learning gains for students.



Professional learning teams

- Enhance a school's capacity for change for improvement
- Help schools become decision-makers in the change process
- Value and extend teacher professionalism
- Develop plans and activities to implement change
- Support the staff of a school as they implement change



Team Composition

- Lead by the principal (or a nominee) as a separate group, or a sub-group of school management team
- Varied in size to reflect needs, interests and capacities of the school (at least four members)
- Representative of the school staff



Role of the team

The professional learning team:

- develops outcomes/goals in order to implement reform
- identifies strategies to support the achievement of the outcomes
- coordinates, evaluates and reports on the implementation of change



Why teams?

- Teams tend to be better at solving problems, have a higher level of commitment, and include more people who can help implement an idea or plan.
- Teams are able to generate enthusiasm for new projects.



Building learning teams

- Teams can become more efficient, with less conflict and more successful decision-making, by participating in training for effective team building.
- Teams need to learn how collaboration and a shared culture can support teamwork.



Effective teams

- Teams must not be too large or too small (4 - 8 members).
- Members should have complementary skills.
- Teams must have a truly meaningful purpose with a specific goal or goals.
- Teams must have realistic timelines.
- The team and its members must establish a clear approach to the team's work.
- Members must have a sense of mutual accountability.



Effective teams

- Teams must have knowledgeable, skilled and supportive formal leadership
- Teams must manage the tensions between personal and professional relationships within the team
- All team members must consider themselves to be change agents and leaders
- Teams implement change in ways and rates different from one another



Activity 10

- Read Scenario 2
- Highlight ideas about professional learning that struck you as interesting or that could be applied in your school.



Your role

- You are the core learning team in your school.
- You now have the knowledge and skills to move your school forward in the reform process.