Leading for Social Justice in Our Schools and Communities: One Story

Anti-Racism Education Professional Development
Saskatoon Public Schools

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Preface

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Project Abstract

This research report documents the story of the Social Justice Disposition Committee, Saskatoon Public Schools anti-racist education professional development initiative for leaders. The initiative arose out of a moral imperative by leaders in the SPS wanting to make a difference in the way they supported their staff to create nurturing learning environments and equitable outcomes for Indigenous students, and for all students.

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Executive Summary

The Anti-racist Education Professional Development Plan is a holistic professional development initiative created by Saskatoon Public Schools, Social Justice Disposition Committee to support their own learning in anti-racist education. A leadership development team provides support that models processes to engage leaders in professional conversations about *leadership for social justice*.

The initiative arose out of a moral imperative by leaders in Saskatoon Public Schools wanting to make a difference in the way they support their staff in creating nurturing learning environments and equitable outcomes for Indigenous students, and all students. Based on their own study through reading and listening to key informants/experts, leaders gained awareness of deeper systemic conditions affecting inequities of outcomes in the learning context for Indigenous students. The *Truth and Reconciliation’s Commission of Canada Calls to Action* in 2015 made their learning initiative more urgent.

The Anti-racist Education Professional Development Plan is an organic process, based on learning needs and aspirations of the learners. It is not content focused. It is an invitation to leaders to dig deeper, to examine their own thinking, beliefs and values, and to begin to understand how systemic racism operates in their own lives and in the lives of the students in their schools. It is an invitation to creatively imagine new ways of being and thinking to benefit the learning of Indigenous students and, ultimately, all students. The plan is based on a strong theoretical foundation, an examination of leadership praxis from selected readings, and discursive processes designed by a leadership development team that grounds leaders’ learning in the day to day practice in schools. The Anti-racist Education Professional Development Plan is premised on a belief that ‘a certain disposition’ in the “human resources” of an organization can make a difference in the educational success of Indigenous children and youth.

Three years after starting the initiative, leaders in Saskatoon Public Schools are talking about racism. The Anti-racist Professional Development Plan has shifted the mindset of leaders, who have gained the confidence to extend the conversations into their own schools as a result of its strong theoretical foundation. It has created opportunity and hope for people craving to understand the changes required by the report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s work and its Calls to Action.
Saskatoon Public Schools Anti-Racist Education Professional Development Plan

A Brief Description of the Anti-racist Education Professional Development Plan

The Anti-racist Education Professional Development Plan (AEPD Plan) is a holistic professional development initiative created by Saskatoon Public Schools - Social Justice Disposition Committee (SPS - SJDC) to support its own learning in anti-racist education, through the leadership of a development team that models processes to engage leaders in professional conversations about leadership for social justice. Members of SJDC include designated leaders such as superintendents, principals, vice-principals, and coordinators. In the fall of 2017, other groups such as speech pathologists, psychologists, researchers, information technology specialists, and support personnel joined the group. The initiative arose out of a moral imperative by leaders in the SPS to make a difference in the way they supported their staffs in creating nurturing learning environments and equitable outcomes for Indigenous students, and all students. The work of the SJDC became more urgent as a result of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada Calls to Action (2015). The terms of reference of the SJDC are attached as Appendix B.

Context - History, Needs and Aspirations, Interests and Assumptions

The Saskatoon Board of Education No. 13, hereafter referred to as Saskatoon Public Schools or SPS, is located in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. It is the largest school division in Saskatchewan with 49 elementary schools, 10 secondary schools, two associate schools and one alliance school. Saskatoon Public Schools includes the Whitecap Dakota First Nation located in the traditional territory of the Cree, Dakota, Dené, Lakota, Métis, Nakota, and Saulteaux nations. Overall, its current student population is approximately 25,000. The population of First Nation, Métis and Inuit students (self-declared) has grown from 4,002 in 2014-15 to 4,435 in 2016-17. This does not include pre-kindergarten students (SPS Annual Report 2016-2017).

SPS is governed by a 10-person elected Board of Education. One member is Indigenous. Each school is represented by a School Community Council that works closely with the school administrative team to facilitate parent and community participation in planning and providing advice to the Board of Education, the school’s staff, and other agencies involved in the learning, growth and well-being of students.

Its philosophical foundation is premised on inspiring and sustaining learning for all children and youth “so they may discover, develop, and act upon their potential, thereby enriching their lives and our community.” Its strategic goals include: academic, personal, social, and cultural development, and its values include: joy, respect, responsibility, and excellence for all students.
Saskatoon Public Schools envision a learning community that is caring, committed to celebrating diversity, and respected for its focus on learning. We believe we can create a future in which students eagerly embrace learning. We believe that learning has the power to build confidence and inspire hope.

Its core strategies to achieve goals focused on student learning, on staff, organizational sustainability, and community partnerships include: Literacy for Life and Collegiate Renewal. Following the TRC Calls to Action, SPS recognized a duty to educate students about residential schools. Its stated commitments, excerpted from its 2016-2017 report, include:

**SPS focuses on integrating Indigenous knowledge in the classroom through experiential learning.** We answer the call to honour Indigenous identity by providing respectful, culturally responsive environments that foster positive learning relationships and by teaching the curriculum that infuses Indigenous ways of knowing.

Saskatoon Public Schools staff members are leaders and role models. We strive to provide our staff members with a richer understanding of Indigenous history on this land and with the resources they need to carry this learning in their work. We know that our division must model the changes we seek to realize. We answer the call by building our organization’s cultural competencies through division-wide processes and professional learning that grow our collective understanding about Indigenous identity, histories, worldview, and systemic barriers.

We believe strong partnerships with families, Elders, and communities are vital to reconciliation. Our Okiciyapi Partnership with Saskatoon Tribal Council and Central Urban Métis Federation Inc. has strengthened our Cree and Métis language and culture programs. Our alliance agreement with Whitecap Dakota First Nation demonstrates a collaborative vision to provide the best available education to students. We answer the call by enriching our partnerships in order to enhance educational opportunities for our students.

At Saskatoon Public Schools, we believe in creating safe spaces where knowledge of our past is seamlessly embedded in our work. Striving for a more respectful, inclusive community is our common goal. We honour the survivors of residential schools and their descendants and purposefully answer the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Calls to Action by aspiring to live by our school division values: Respect, Excellence, Joy, and Responsibility.

Like all school divisions in the province of Saskatchewan, SPS is required by the Ministry of Education to pursue the priority actions set each year (Province of Saskatchewan Minister of Education Plan 2017-2018), guided by the policies and directions set provincially for building partnerships (Province of Saskatchewan Partnerships, 2003) with Indigenous communities and by its policy for inspiring success by placing value on Indigenous Peoples’ languages, knowledge systems, and shared history as central to the
learning program for all students (Province of Saskatchewan Inspiring Success, 2009). This includes mandatory Treaty education for all students.

However, how it carries out the priorities is based on its own leadership, insights, creativity, and resourcefulness. Nor is it restricted from drawing on other resources, locally, nationally or internationally, to realize its vision and its own set of priorities each year. In addition to its response to the Calls to Action by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, SPS leaders also responded to the findings of Saskatchewan’s Student First initiative and the Joint Task Force on Improving Education and Employment Outcomes for First Nations and Métis (2013) foundational findings as a basis for moving the agenda for Aboriginal education forward. Foundational findings of this report include:

- **Mutual, Dignified Relationships** - “The Joint Task Force recognizes the goal of equitable outcomes in education and employment is only possible through ‘reconciliation’ of the relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples.” (p. 24-25)

- **Poverty Reduction and Acknowledging the Prevalence of Racism** - “The Joint Task Force recognizes the importance of poverty reduction and anti-racism as complementary strategies to improve outcomes in education and employment for First Nations and Métis peoples.” (p. 26-29)

- **Recognizing First Nations and Métis Cultures and Languages** - “The Joint Task Force recognizes the importance of language and culture as foundational to the well-being and success of First Nations and Métis peoples, and as a foundation of a shared Saskatchewan heritage.” (p. 29-30)

**Anti-racist Education and Leadership for Social Justice**

Two central themes were at play in the course of my conversations with the SJDC Leadership Development Team (hereafter referred to, in short, as the Leadership Development Team): anti-racist education and leadership for social justice. Anticipating the writing of this report, I asked whether they had adopted any working definitions for the central themes. They had not, but expressed “that given people are on their own learning journeys, making working definitions of key concepts such as anti-racist education and leadership for social justice more explicit may be important, as concepts could mean different things to different people, depending on where they might be on their journey.” I discerned from our conversations and from the literature, the following composite definitions.

Anti-racism education is defined as the examination of the power imbalances between people who are racialized and those who are non-racialized or White. In theory, these power imbalances play out in the form of unearned privileges that White people benefit from and racialized people do not (McIntosh, 1988; Schick & St Denis, 2005). Anti-racism education is an active process of identifying, challenging, and changing the values, structures, and behaviours that perpetuate systemic racism (University of Calgary, no date).
Its purposes are:

- To transform individual thinking, institutions, and society through awareness of the history of racism;
- To understand how racism is manifested in individual attitudes and behaviours, and practices and policies of institutions (spoken and unspoken), specifically, the education system in this context. However, it is necessary to cast a wider lens to law, economics, science, religion etc. to gain a deeper understanding of systemic racism affecting the lives of Indigenous people in Canada and worldwide (Hoppers & Richards, 2012; Cannon, Martin J., 2018);
- To understand how it affects the lived experiences and learning of students, families, and communities who are racialized, and how systemic racism has an impact on all of society.

The ultimate goal of the SPS-AEPD Plan is leadership for social justice, whereby Indigenous children succeed as a result of leaders creating space/place of authentic learning experiences for the students. Leadership for social justice means “disrupting and subverting arrangements promoting marginalization and exclusionary practices” based on race, class, gender, disability, sexual orientation, and other historically marginalizing conditions in society. Leadership for social justice means leadership, advocacy, vision, and practices built upon processes of respect, care, recognition, and empathy (Theoharis, 2007).

As offered by the Leadership Development Team, ultimately, an anti-racist education initiative for leaders should create a dynamic effect on an organization and on how things are done. Teachers, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, engaged in anti-racist pedagogy in the classroom setting, and in their schools and communities need to be actively supported by leaders at the school and school division level. The Leadership Development Team understands the value of the work and the challenges associated with change. Organizations cannot keep doing the same thing and hoping for different results; it is challenging work (D.1).

**History and Description of the Project**

The work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission looking into experiences of Indigenous people in residential schools and the work of the Joint Task Force looking into the experiences in education and employment of First Nations and Métis people in Saskatchewan created a growing sense of urgency in a group of leaders in SPS, as well as a deeper awareness of the systemic conditions that give rise to inequities in learning outcomes for Indigenous students, and their impact on all students. The work began slowly “with a lot of reading and listening” (D.1). Tom Malloy shared information on Treaties, the entire administrative group read *The Comeback* by John Raulston Saul, and the writer of this report was invited to share the work of Joint Task Force in April 2015, with a focus on the foundational themes critical to the actions of their 25 recommendations. The
importance of poverty reduction and anti-racism as complementary strategies was highlighted as means to improve outcomes in education and employment for First Nations and Métis in the province. Administrators at the senior level decided on the need to focus on racism. Leaders, by virtue of the positions conferred, have a pivotal role in shaping organizational culture. They expressed “the need to understand the relationships, history and, finally, how did we get here?” According to Brenda Green, then superintendent of education, and now Vice-president for Education at Indspire, who provided leadership at the senior level for this initiative, “the last statement especially gave the impetus to begin the work—HOW DID WE GET HERE?” (D.1).

After some preliminary work internally by a smaller group of leaders, the Social Justice Disposition Committee was formalized and Terms of Reference were adopted to guide its work (Appendix B). The stated outcome of SJDC is to “provide supports for Saskatoon Public Schools senior leaders to further develop a social justice mindset through strength based action-oriented deliverables that directly impact students in the classroom and to establish best practice for our First Nations, Métis, and Inuit learners.” Its deliverables include:

- Provide professional development to senior staff with an opportunity to examine beliefs, as well as the origins of those beliefs (history, colonization, and repurposing beliefs) through reflection, discussion, and critical analysis that can be shared with and used by all staff.
- Develop professional development strategies that provide theory and practical action application involving current and future Saskatoon Public School staff.
- Provide resources and supports for educators that are sustainable— starting with the basics and building deeper understandings over time.

The Leadership Development Team supporting the work internally was acutely aware that its approach to this work was of paramount importance, for all the reasons stated in the preceding section. It had to be supportive and not to “push too quickly” to ensure there was opportunity for deep learning, and it had to be creative in its delivery so leaders could see themselves immediately in this work. The literature chronicling the experiences of learners immersed in anti-racist education supports their approach (Tatum, 1992; Schick & St. Denis, 2003).

Creating responsive leadership for social justice and equity is not finite. It is complex and multi-dimensional, and cannot be a prescribed list to check off (Theoharis, 2007; D.1 - St. Denis). Brown (2004) outlines a pragmatic process-oriented model that is responsive to the challenges of preparing educational leaders committed to social justice and equity. Her tripartite theoretical framework captures the critical elements that SPS has woven into its holistic learning model. The pedagogy aimed at developing transformative leaders for social justice is framed within three interwoven theoretical perspectives: adult learning theory/development, transformative learning theory and processes, and critical social theory, all with the purpose of promoting (1) awareness through critical reflection, (2) acknowledgement through rational discourse, and (3) action through policy praxis.
Because transformational learning can pose threats to psychological security, professional learning experiences need to be carefully planned, with adequate debriefing opportunities in structured settings that adhere to safety and confidentiality guidelines. It is also important to bridge theory and practise. The Leadership Development Team understood both the opportunity and the challenge for individuals engaged in the work. They noted, “It could open possibilities of new friendships and the loss of old friends. It could affect relationships. As a result, it could be a lonely time” (D.1). This type of learning was reinforced by the focus group when describing challenges presented to them as learner and leader in the AEPD Plan. They recalled a common experience of sharing articles about Indigenous peoples’ experiences in the United States with staff members. They noted a push-back from some staff members that proved to be challenging—or more accurately, “disheartening” when some teachers couldn’t make a connection to Indigenous peoples’ experiences in Saskatchewan, despite the fact that “colonization happened all over the world.” It was noted that people are often quick to put up barriers, making one member of the focus group wonder aloud, “if the barriers put up are not purposeful” (D.4).

It has also become clearer to Indigenous educators and academics in the field that promoting the understanding of Indigenous cultures and languages, and Indigenous knowledge systems is not enough. Educators must also gain a deeper understanding of the systemic conditions underlying colonization if they are to succeed in reconciliation and the calls for action (Styres, 2017; Schick and St Denis, 2005). Inclusion of Indigenous knowledge systems and experiences in the curriculum and anti-racist education are not mutually exclusive. As the Truth and Reconciliation Commission concluded in their final summary report in the simplest of terms:

“The way we govern ourselves must change; laws must change; policies and programs must change; the way we educate our children and ourselves must change; the way we do business must change; thinking must change; and, the way we talk to, and about, each other must change; all Canadians must make a firm and lasting commitment to reconciliation to ensure that Canada is a country where our children and grandchildren can thrive.” (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2015, p.364)

In the Spring of 2014, Brenda Green, on behalf of the Leadership Development Team reached out to Dr. Verna St Denis, a faculty member in Educational Foundations at the College of Education, University of Saskatchewan with expertise in anti-racist education, to explore possibilities of working with the group, to serve as an advisor and to share her knowledge of the subject. She joined the group in the late spring of 2015 (confirmed in communication with Leadership Development Team, May 22, 2018). To create knowledge and understanding of racism and its impact on learning and relationships, the Leadership Development Team underscored the importance of laying the groundwork of shared foundational knowledge of both the “discourse and theory” of anti-racist education (D-1).
Social Justice Disposition Committee

The majority of members in the SJDC are designated leaders such as superintendents, principals, vice-principals, and coordinators. In the fall of 2017, other groups such as speech pathologist, psychologist, researchers, technology specialist, and support personnel joined the group. It began with 12-15 principals and vice-principals gathering for breakfast meetings approximately four years ago, and it grew—morphing into half-day professional development sessions in the beginning of 2016-2017 school year, and continuing into the 2017-2018 school year. In 2016-2017, the Leadership Development Team added processes to promote action and application. SPS drew upon its own ranks for leadership—individuals committed to a professional practice that applies a critical, anti-racist, anti-oppressive stance. In the first two years, the SJDC met three times each year, and in the last two years the committee met five times each year. Currently, approximately 35 professionals from K-12 participate in the PD program, with ¾ or about 80% participating on a consistent basis.

The SJDC or the participants of this initiative are stakeholders in SPS Leadership Learning Program (LLP), which focuses all its energy towards being “a learning community that is caring, committed to celebrating diversity, and respected for its focus on learning.” The creation of this specific learning community of leaders served as a model for the school division’s LLP.

The fact that SPS has taken up the challenge to uncover, “how did we get here?” following its review of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s work is not a surprise. While unspoken, the leadership of SPS has been fully cognizant that reconciliation cannot begin without authentic engagement, a willingness to take risks and to truly “make the road by walking” (Friere & Norton, 1987). The SJDC also understood this is not a learning journey taken alone; it requires taking the whole community along, asking for help, providing support, being non-judgmental, taking leadership and acting on what is good for the whole learning community. Above all, it requires courage and genuine commitment to the change that is sought, and trust that the people in the positions to effect change at the highest level of the organization will be supportive of the kind of leadership being provided in the system. This is especially so for work in anti-racist education.

For all of these reasons, membership in SJDC is fluid and open, and as people learn about the initiative, they ask to join. This feature is not without its drawbacks. It can be challenging providing transition from one learning community event to another for participants; and there is concern that participants may “drag” the momentum of learning in the community, because they have missed critical aspects of the learning/unlearning, conversations and processes (D.1).
A “Leadership Development Team” provides support internally for the AEPD initiative. This included then Superintendent of Education, Brenda Green (B.Ed., M.Ed.) who resigned in June 30, 2017. In the transition of Brenda Green leaving SPS in June 2017 to join Indspire, Dean Newton (B.Sc. - Physical Education, B.Ed., M.Ed.) Superintendent of Education, stepped in as lead, fully recognizing he was on a learning journey like everyone else. He now provides the connection to the senior administrative staff of SPS. It also includes: Mary H. Bishop (B.Ed., M.Ed. Curr.), Author, Consultant/Literacy 2014 - 2018 (retiring on June 30, 2018); Deighan Remoundos (B. Ed., M.Ed. Curr., M.Ed. ETAD.), Education Consultant 2014-2018 (assuming role as vice principal in fall of 2018); and, Alisa Favel (B. Ed.), Educational Consultant, First Nations, Inuit and Métis Unit (on educational leave in 2018-2019). Dr. Verna St Denis, Professor, University of Saskatchewan works closely with the team providing direction and leadership for this initiative in the school division.

Verna St Denis’ role as advisor involves listening to the debriefing conversations of the SJDC Development Team as they share observations and assess the sessions, and then offering possible topics to cover, or recommending articles for reading as next steps. And, as noted earlier, Verna St Denis is also the key expert, and much respected for her grounded experience and knowledge. The Leadership Development Team’s role entails navigating the culture of SPS, specifically the decision-making structures and organizational protocols. As stated earlier, this requires courage and genuine commitment to the desired change, and trust that the people in the positions to effect change will be supportive of the kind of leadership required in anti-racist education and leading for social justice.

The Leadership Development Team also identifies critical content and processes to engage participants. Connecting theory and practice is important to leaders immersed in a live leadership role; making connections through various activities and processes becomes central to the design of the collaborative learning sessions. The work of the SJDC learning initiative or AEPD plan pushes learners out of their comfort zone, challenging beliefs and values, and inviting rethinking of relationships and praxis. As the Leadership Development Team described it, “there is lots of learning and unlearning going on.” So, “the [Leadership] Development Team is walking alongside leaders. We offer multiple entry points for learning. The process [for learning and or engagement] is not linear” (D.1). The leadership Development Team models discursive processes that leaders can use with their staff (D.2). As a follow-up, the Team provides members access to resources and information through a closed web portal.
Connection to Indspire Principles for Indigenous Educational Practice

The most significant principle at work in this initiative is Principle 7, which states:

Recognizing the legacy of the colonial histories of Indigenous peoples, education is also a process of decolonization, which seeks to strengthen, enhance & strengthen and embrace Indigenous knowledge and experience through various strategies including but not limited to anti-racist, anti-oppressive pedagogies and Indigenous pedagogies.

As stated earlier, it has become increasingly clear to Indigenous educators and academics in the field that promoting the understanding of Indigenous cultures and languages, and Indigenous knowledge systems is not enough to transform the educational experiences of students in schools. Educators also need to gain a deeper understanding of the systemic conditions underlying colonization, if they are to succeed in reconciliation and the calls to action.

An observation was shared that in the Saskatchewan context, there is little opportunity for educational leaders to gain understanding of systemic issues that give rise to inequity of educational outcomes for learners. An opportunity was presented with Saskatchewan’s Following Their Voices, which is based on New Zealand’s Te Kotihitanga—a research-based professional development program to raise Maori educational achievement by supporting teachers and school leaders to become more culturally responsive through promoting Maori culture and language, with anti-racist education as a critical aspect to the process. Unfortunately, Following Our Voices did not imbed the anti-racist education component (D.1).

Close examination of SPS vision, strategic plan, and partnerships with First Nations and Métis also capture Principles 1 - 6 through its various commitments, programs, and initiatives.

Philosophical Foundations - Vision, Values and Principles

In the course of conversations with the Leadership Development Team, the philosophical premise of the AEPD Plan emerged with greater clarity. The team adopted Learning to Lead Kokum Style, a holistic learning framework or model (McLeod, 2012; see Figure 1) that aligns strongly with the underlying premise, principles, and values of the professional development plan for leaders and SPS Leadership for Learning Program (LLP) framework. The holistic framework views learning to lead as “a cyclical process of reflection, experience, and self direction” (McLeod, p. 17). Each of the processes contributes to a leader’s understanding and the actions taken. Learning is holistic, grounded in processes that are “spiritually driven, emotionally supportive, physically applied, and mentally understood” (McLeod, p.18). It influences all aspects of a person. Reflection promotes understanding of personal experience; experience enriches learning by contributing to
consciousness about the world; and, self-direction brings about change for the good of all—“it is in the doing” (McLeod, p.20). Leadership is a learned intergenerational, interconnected process that arises from the self, family, community, and the larger society. Stories are viewed as the active channel for learning skills, attitudes, sensibilities, knowledge, and values from one another. Learning for leadership is a dynamic, active process where individuals contribute to understanding of the leadership required in context of a consensus-based vision, by sharing their unique experiences and insights.

**Figure 1: Learning to Lead Kokum Style - A Holistic Framework**

SPS AEPD Plan for leaders is premised on the idea that each leader is on their own learning journey, which must be respected. Furthermore, *leadership for social justice* is not a one-dimensional or a one-way process. As the model depicts, there are multiple entry points for learning, and the processes for learning and engagement are not linear. Influences that arise from the self, from family, from community, and from society are
taken into consideration. The community of learners feed individuals and vice versa. That said, it was noted that individuals might still feel alone in their journeys, away from supportive community. Each leader participating in the AEPD Plan is invited to make a contribution to the larger conversation of the community of leaders charged with responsibility of leadership and all that it entails in SPS. The SPS values their life experiences and the varied contexts in which they work. The Leadership Development Team noted, “There are opportunities for being creative with the environment you are in. It is relationship/trust-based allowing for people to really get to know one another. It provides three levels of learning: seeing self in the group vis-a-vis content, engagement in discursive processes as practice, and application of both content and processes with their own staff” (D.1). The Leadership Development Team noted further, “the application of a ‘harvest strategy’ for reflection at the end of each session… privileges individual voice—a connection to Following Their Voices” (D.1). The hope is that the learning opportunity created for anti-racist education will have long-term impact, where an incident at some future time may take an individual back to a reflective stance, recognizing that an individual’s learning journey is never complete (Linton, 2008).

In the course of our conversations to map this courageous work of SPS, the Leadership Development Team explored the risks and ways to minimize those risks. These ideas will be explored in this report as part of the section on ‘Challenges and Opportunities, Sustaining the Work and Risk Assessment’.

**Intended Outcomes - Short to Long Term and Ultimate Goal or Impact**

Outcomes represent the difference that a project or initiative will make to the current situation. In theory, short-term outcomes often include such changes as knowledge, awareness or skills, while intermediate outcomes often include changes in thinking, behaviour or practices, and long-term or ultimate impact will include changes in social, economic, political or cultural community conditions. Applying this framework, the emerging consensus of the intended outcomes for this initiative was described as follows:

- **Short Term**: to increase understanding of systemic conditions and barriers to learning by administrative leaders so they can look critically at their own thinking and practice, and allow teachers to be open and free to do their business or what is important to nurturing a supportive learning environment for all students; recognizing oppression is real; and, becoming self-aware in their own location in society.

- **Mid-term**: Administrative leaders are opening doors as allies and supporting the work of teachers engaged in innovative and transformative teaching practices in the school and community or influencing teachers to undertake the leadership required in their classrooms. The focus is on the potential of human resources and the change they can create.

- **Long term**: Social justice. *Justice* in this context means Indigenous children are succeeding in schools, the administration is creating space/place of authentic
learning experiences for Indigenous students, and participants are seeing the humanity of Indigenous people.

As stated earlier, ultimately, the SPS-AEPD initiative is nurturing leadership for social justice, resulting in a dynamic effect on the organization and how things are done. To achieve learning and success for Indigenous students and for all students, “the system cannot continue to do the same thing harder” (D.1). Another related long-term outcome expressed was the need to build commitment to professional learning for anti-racist and anti-oppressive education in the colleges of education and university as a whole, and in the on-going professional learning for teachers. On a cautionary note, the realization of this long-term outcome should not detract from professional learning communities conversing on site about systemic conditions in society that give rise to inequities and injustice.

**Planned Work - Major Activities and Strategies**

Core learning experiences of the AEPD initiative involve: reading, listening, critical dialogue or sharing, meaning making, checking-in, and providing feedback as part of a community of learners. Building on the feedback provided, along with the Leadership Development Team’s observations, core-learning experiences are created at the end of each session. It is an organic process, based on learning needs and aspirations of the learners. The Leadership Development Team underscored that “AEPD is not content focused. It is an invitation to dig deep into ourselves and our thinking, beliefs and values, and to begin to understand how systemic racism operates in our own lives, and in the lives of the students we teach” (D.1). It is also an invitation to creatively imagine new ways of being and thinking so it benefits the learning of Indigenous students, and ultimately all students.

Strong theoretical knowledge, based on selected readings by the Leadership Development Team and lectures by Verna St Denis, are the foundation of the learning program. Based on this evaluator’s participation and observation of two sessions, discursive discourse processes that promoted deep thinking, meaning-making, critical analysis, and empathy were utilized along with a lecture, video presentations, and readings to address questions and issues of cultural and social significance affecting the learning environments of Indigenous students. Often it came in the form of “unpacking” the why of certain beliefs, values, discourses embedded in everyday practices, and looking at who benefits. The learning in this context was more than an academic exercise, as leaders were pushed to think about the implications of what they were learning about their own leadership practices (D.1).

In the same way that leaders are invited to create welcoming and open learning environments for students, staff, and their communities, a critical feature of this initiative is ensuring a safe, open, and welcoming environment that respects where people are in their own learning journeys about anti-racism and leadership for social justice. Meetings are
often held within the larger community as a way of connecting to the resources in the community.

Figure 2 below captures the topics/themes covered since March 2015 to the present (or at the time of writing this report).

Figure 2: Topics/Themes - Anti-racist Education Professional Development Plan

An unstructured conversation on racism was held in March 2015, using selected readings to engage participants. This was followed by an examination of the following themes: schools as White spaces; myths that blind—an examination of meritocracy and colour blindness; engaging allies; history of racism; a conversation on the impact of anti-racism on learning by participants; and an exploration of the leader as learner. For this latter session, a holistic leadership, learning framework for the AEPD plan was shared, providing participants with an opportunity to situate their own growth within the framework (Figure 1). The results shared by the Leadership Development Team highlighted the appreciation that leaders felt for the opportunity to learn, to share their experiences, look anew at socialized stereotypes, examine their own privileges and biases, and to change their own responses and practices in the schools.
Materials Developed and Resources Required

A web portal has been created to share resources and materials with SJDC members. Resources include readings, processes engaged in, and summary results of reflections offered by members. The resources are shared to bridge gaps when people may have missed a session.

To share resources more widely, as part of the Indspire’s Nurturing Capacity program, the Leadership Development Team reviewed, refined, and embedded reflection pieces (listening, deep thinking, and collaborative growth fostered) in a Google Folder which can be accessed at the following site: https://drive.google.com/open?id=1ZQGDO6JcAC7kiAllI WVdOMGnRkjm2Oc.

The discursive processes listed on the document Social Justice Development and Strategy List can be used with multiple articles, videos, etc. and are meant to bring people’s thoughts, values, and beliefs to the work. The Leadership Development Team believes that “by sharing with one another and engaging in the experiences, our worldviews expand and grow as a collective.” The articles listed in the Google folder are suggestions based on their experiences in the Social Justice Disposition Committee’s work in their school division. The material shared can be used as is or adapted as needed by others wishing to replicate a leadership for social justice initiative in their school system.

In the face of significant funding cuts, SPS has worked creatively to cover expenses for the PD plan from various sources. Core costs associated with the PD plan include a stipend for the expert leader, incidentals (snacks) and resources (books, etc.). The PD sessions are currently held in SPS facilities. The plan has operated without a budget to cover substitute costs for the release of members with teaching assignments (a recognized constraint by SPS administration). An allocation in the budget for 2018-2019 will cover substitute costs.

Logic Model for the Project

In practice, there is no limitation placed on what the design of a logic model might be or should be; its intention is to “logically” capture the core aspects of the change sought by an organization, institution or community. Applying critical Indigenous theory, an adapted Logic Model was utilized as the framework to guide the dialogue and conversations, and to conceptualize and communicate the change effort of SPS “to nurture capacity” that will benefit First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students, and ultimately, all students (Appendix A). The model utilized invited clear articulation of the changes that SPS hoped to bring about through the AEPD Plan. It included such factors as: with and/or for whom; its philosophical premise to include both vision and guiding principles and/or values; the activities planned and the resources required to contribute to change; the assumptions the organization is making and its considerations of both historical, and external and
internal environmental factors that could influence the change effort. The latter is examined through potentialities of a strength-based assets lens and the historical realities affecting the communities served by SPS efforts for change (Cajete, 2015; W.K. Kellogg Logic Model Foundation Development Guide 2004).

The italicized components in this adapted model reflect additional, critical components in envisioning a change process from an Indigenous perspective. This includes a philosophical foundation as a core aspect of the change process that captures its vision, guiding principles, and values as anchors to stay the course, and an acknowledgement of historical factors, along with institutional and societal environmental factors affecting the current situation. To counteract the prevailing failure discourse and gap mentality of evaluation and monitoring processes as it concerns Indigenous people, a strength-based assets lens is utilized as a building block for change.

The AEPD Logic Model follows below (Figure 3). It is intended to read from the bottom up. All aspects of the plan constitute important elements to address the systemic racism that produces inequality in institutions and society. Erring on the side of clarity, I have deliberately moved away from brevity, which is often the norm in the creation of Logic Models.
### Figure 3: Logic Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>ULTIMATE GOAL</strong></th>
<th>Leadership for social justice leading to systemic change in the educational system.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>LONG TERM OUTCOMES</strong></td>
<td>Creating spaces/places of authentic learning for Indigenous students, and seeing the humanity of Indigenous people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MEDIUM TERM OUTCOMES</strong></td>
<td>Influencing teachers to undertake the leadership required in their classrooms and schools. Opening doors as allies and supporting the work of teachers engaged in innovative and transformative teaching practices in the school and community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SHORT TERM OUTCOMES</strong></td>
<td>Increase understanding of systemic conditions and barriers to learning. Critically examining thinking and practices that reproduce oppression and inequity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INPUTS</strong></td>
<td>Sufficient funding to cover expenses. Expertise to provide a strong theoretical knowledge base. Time and space for leaders as a community of learners to pursue learning in anti-racist education. Knowledgeable, skilled, and committed staff providing leadership. Effective internal and external communication.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **ACTIVITIES** | Core learning experiences based on learning needs and aspirations of the learners, through lectures, video presentations, and readings. Discursive discourse processes that promote deep thinking, meaning-making, critical analysis, and empathy:  
  ▪ “Unpacking” the why of certain beliefs, values, discourses embedded in every day practices, and who benefits.  
  ▪ Exploration of real life questions and issues of cultural and social significance affecting the learning environments of Indigenous students.  
  ▪ Reflecting on individual and collective growth as a community of leaders. |
| **OUTPUTS (PERFORMANCE)** | Completion of Grade 12 and increased graduation rates for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students. Transformative classroom and school environments - space/place of authentic learning experiences for Indigenous students, and about Indigenous people. Holistic learning and growth of leaders in SPS. |
| **ASSUMPTIONS** | Willing partners and allies. Commitment by the Board of Education and senior administrative leadership. Shared leadership and commitment to SPS vision and strategic goals. |
| **PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATION** | SPS is “a learning community that is caring, committed to celebrating diversity, and respected for its focus on learning.”  
  ▪ A self-selecting, welcoming, safe, open learning environment for all staff.  
  ▪ Real-life, courageous conversations.  
  ▪ Supporting innovative and transformative teaching and practice in classrooms and schools. |

AEPD Plan Logic Model
Performance Indicator and Measures

The AEPD initiative is in the early stages of development. The AEPD Plan’s degree of impact on student learning is difficult to assess at this early juncture, and it may prove difficult to isolate its impact from the myriad of initiatives directed to supporting student learning with a social justice focus. Currently, SPS has four distinct initiatives: Indian and Métis Education Unit, the Concentus Initiative, an Indigenous Professional Learning Community (IPLC) and its AEPD Plan, the latter being the subject of this report. The First Nations and Métis Education Unit provides global support to the system by creating professional learning opportunities for administrators and teachers, and it identifies and provides curricular support for classrooms. Concentus, on the other hand, is a curricular-centred initiative that is external to SPS. The IPLC is open to all professional staff in the system. The AEPD Plan is a unique professional learning initiative for organizational and administrative leaders in SPS. Participants in this initiative are members of Social Justice Disposition Committee, in which Concentus schools also participate.

All four initiatives engage in similar processes and all have a vested interest in SPS vision to support learning success for all students, although resources to carry out the work vary in each. The AEDP Plan is unique in its focus on leaders and leadership and its examination of self, “Whiteness”, on power and privilege in society. Leaders share knowledge and experiences with each other and learn together about the ways they can support their teachers and staff responsible for creating supportive learning environments for First Nations and Métis students, and for all students.

Quantitative

The success of Indigenous students is one of the central premises of SPS professional development supports and processes for teachers and leaders (Bourassa, 2017; Jutras, 2014). As part of its monitoring and assessment program, SPS gathers from various sources to monitor its progress year to year. A listing of the various data SPS collects to monitor and report its progress is captured in the Evaluation Plan (Appendix A). Agreement was sought and provided by the partners in this project for the use of the quantitative data provided by SPS, as part of a Nurturing Capacity initiative of their Leadership for Learning framework in 2015-16, to be applied as a baseline for future evaluations of the AEPD Plan.

Qualitative

How will we know thinking has shifted and/or practices changed in the learning environment created for Indigenous and non-Indigenous students? What are some possible indicators? Verna St Denis shared the difficulty of measuring change [in mindset] of students engaged in anti-racist education. She noted that in her experience, “it takes more than a course to have impact…in a class of 30, 5 will be determined to find out more.” She offered, “indicators may include: a continuing commitment to their learning journey; participating in committees; demonstrating a way of life - teaching; joining people in the struggle; struggle to live an ethical life; and understanding that inequality diminishes
all” (D.1). The Leadership Development Team also shared that an ongoing feedback loop is a critical aspect of the initiative, where participants are invited to share as members of the learning community, and how the knowledge gained in anti-racist education has changed their mindset and practices.

In the planning conversations held with principal players of this initiative, various measures and ways that might be utilized to gauge SPS central office and school administrative leaders’ learning and growth were explored. This included the integration of questions into the current tools that SPS utilizes to monitor and assess progress toward achieving its stated goals and priorities, which includes success for First Nations and Métis students. The current tools utilized include: Cultural Competency Continuum - a rubric created by SPS; the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) to assess intercultural competence—ability to shift cultural perspective and to adapt behaviour to cultural differences and commonalities; and assessment of administrators based on Leadership for Learning Program (LLP) framework.

Pointing to the literature Bourassa (2017), in her report and evaluation of SPS’s LLP, noted the importance of asking recipients (students, staff, and community members) their perceptions to garner impact of professional learning initiatives. In this circumstance the focus of the professional development is on the leaders of the organization—their changes in mindset and practices. The AEPD plan is premised on a belief that a certain disposition in the “human resources” of an organization can make a difference in the educational success of Indigenous children and youth, thus monitoring and gauging the impact on leaders’ mindsets and practices in the short to medium-term is important to the long-term goal of creating spaces/places of authentic learning for Indigenous students in schools. SPS monitoring and assessment practices are comprehensive, using a variety of assessment tools to gauge progress at various levels of the system that includes students, staff, community, and its leadership.

As expressed by principal players of this initiative, anti-racist education challenges, core beliefs and values, and the holistic framework for leadership applied in this case, assumes “leading in a different way for different results” (D.1). Evidence of growth might be best demonstrated through personal stories of learning and/or leadership in action. Assessment and monitoring of the initiative might include a self-reflection tool, anecdotal impact on community; perhaps tying back to SPS Leadership for Learning Framework, and self-assessment tools utilized. By design, assessment could also include pre and post, and interval based reflective narratives on key aspects of the intended outcomes by participants—processes that have proven to be useful in anti-racism education learning contexts to measure/monitor personal growth for each individual or the group as a whole (for examples, see Brown, 2004).

In its early stages, the Leadership Development Team shared anecdotal evidence that the AEPD Plan has fostered important conversations among leaders and their staff (D.1). In the short period of time, the AEPD Plan has had an immense impact on the mindset and confidence of leaders, giving them the courage to take up the critical conversations of decolonization and reconciliation with their staff (D.3 & D.4).
Results from the Focus Group

As part of Indspire’s Nurturing Capacity research/evaluation of the AEPD Plan, a focus group or conversation circle was held on June 11, 2018 with selected SJDC members to assess its impact on members. The group was diverse in its representation of schools and communities. It included four elementary schools and one high school with diverse student populations and socio-economic settings, and one central office staff person with oversight in six schools. One of the features observed in the introductory conversation was the changing and diverse demographic of all schools in SPS, as families from core neighbourhoods moved to the suburbs and vice versa. Indigenous students were present in all schools and gang activity was prevalent for the core neighbourhood schools. All participants are regular attendees of the AEPD Plan, dedicated to the leadership role, with substitute coverage in elementary schools being the only barrier for full attendance. All but one participant served as vice-principal in their school.

Without much prompting, and before the first set of questions could be posed to the group, participants shared the impact of their learning experience. To give the full effect of their experience, I have captured in note form their candid responses (D.4):

- It was my favourite time of the month!
- Best learning; gives me a different perspective!
- It is almost one of the best PD we have ever had; none of us want to miss it!
- The sessions are purposeful and meaningful for the context I work in.
- I feel this should be a requirement for everyone; you are free to express your thoughts and you do not feel judged.
- Given the movement of families in our city, we need to focus on these issues. I had epiphanies throughout.
- The topics engage everyone. People can get stuck in a bubble, and this work is important to all of us.
- Anti-racist education can be lonely work (support-wise, not always there if you don’t have allies). Participants in this program are my support.
- We do need to think about how we might get this learning to everyone who is interested.
- Space provided is sacred (2 ½ hours, a single focus and we have permission from the system – greater to do this work).
- The Leadership Development Team is impactful in their personal stories; Verna is authentic—personal, knowledgeable and experienced; it is the best graduate level course!
- It can be disquieting…. but you feel safe, I like the way they have rolled it out.

I interjected to ask: How can it be replicated elsewhere? Their responses again:
I think it matters who is involved, the type of person chosen to lead the work. Verna walks in both worlds. Verna is highly educated, brings a high level of expertise (research and experience). She is well spoken and brings a strong professionalism. It was necessary to have an Indigenous woman.

The Leadership Development Team is also a huge factor contributing to the success of the PD Plan.

I gained confidence from the theory and discourse of anti-racist education provided in the sessions.

The articles [Yes, Verna, “they can read”] are accessible and readable.

The conversation then turned to the matter of engaging a wider audience of teachers and teaching assistants in anti-racist education. It was felt that the “academic” language and articles selected might need to be tempered somewhat, so these aspects do not create a barrier to learning. An observation was made that, in the current learning context, the audience has graduate level training. It was noted that vice-principals are often charged with professional development initiatives in schools and, in this professional learning context, it would be important for a leadership team in a school to work and learn together because of the challenges that can arise with this type of professional learning (D.4). As Theoharis (2007) observes, leading for social justice means “disrupting and subverting arrangements promoting marginalization and exclusionary practices”, which can be dislocating to learners and thus requires leadership, advocacy, vision, and practices built upon processes of respect, care, recognition, and empathy [throughout an organization].

Extending the conversation, the participants were invited to share ways in which their own mindsets had changed as a result of participating in the PD plan. Again, the richness of the conversation is shared, capturing key points made individually and collectively.

- I am less far on the continuum than I thought I was. You don’t have to be a terrible person to be biased. I have played a pity role and a saviour role.
- [My thinking shifted from] how can I change my school to how can I change myself.
- [I changed from] self-pity (I grew up poor, identified with First Nation) to recognition that] I was still White and I still had opportunities because I was White. I learned I was privileged.
- I use to think it was a good thing not to “see colour”—I am not a racist. [But] I do see colour and I [now] recognize we are not [all] at the same place [socially, economically etc.].
- I had great mentorship [from an Indigenous colleague]—an invitation to view situations with a different lens.
- [Like many], I was looking for the 10-step plan - because I have heard all about residential schools - now show me what I need to do to change things around.
- So much of this work is on “you”, unpacking our privilege and how we are socialized and how we are racialized.
Looking back [at my own life and experience] it’s strange – all I can remember is White, university - White. I hadn’t thought about White privilege until recently.

We are fed the American dream and myths filter into our consciousness daily – the bad press and [negative] messages spread about Indigenous people.

I thought my family was not racist; but we benefited from our relationship with Indigenous people.

In my training to do cognitive tests, I was introduced to the history and the damage done by standardized testing. In shifting my role to psychologist and assessment of students, I began to look critically at reparation – do you test or not? Diagnosis – do you help or not? How do we use standardized tests responsibly (providing context and supports that students need)? I am thinking we need to be looking at the whole child, making recommendations using the standardized pieces as a bridge to understanding, like Verna does with research.

It takes courage to challenge the systems in place. Diagnostic testing is deficit-based versus strength-based; it is important need to look at the education of students longitudinally. Standards--benchmarks are artificial (school-ready; graduation – what is so sacred about 12 years). How can we communicate more effectively with families – who love this child?

Where should our emphasis be: graduation rates and/or a conversation about what education is and is not. What happens if the graduation goal for 2020 is not met?

Sometimes the work is overwhelming and you feel helpless [and other times] you feel so empowered – what the bricks are that we can change, not being afraid to start.

Not being First Nations, I recognize the importance of being an ally; I do the best I know how to make it better [and yes, the importance of remembering that] good intentions can still do harm (D.4).

The focus group or conversation circle closed with a focus on the participants as leaders in their school. What did they feel were the greatest benefits for them as a learner and leader? What were some of the challenges? As noted, they had shared impromptu the benefits afforded by the AEPD plan earlier, which included the impact it had on their leadership. This was presented as an extension and closer examination of the benefits and challenges to them as learner and leader.

Benefits included: examining practices as a team and working/moving from diagnostic to holistic report writing; gaining a certain level of confidence (theory and discourse of ant-racist education), and standing up, being “fired-up”, or “laying on the table”, and bravely entering into difficult conversation or taking up necessary conversations – noting “research informs my passion, it is not just my opinion anymore”; and, offering an observation about the direct impact of a teacher’s curriculum decision to create a sense of recognition and belonging for Indigenous students (D.4).

In examining the challenges, participants shared that it was sometimes hard not to come
off as a-know-it-all or as self-righteous, especially when faced with “push-back” from staff to the articles or learning shared. They agreed this push-back was the most challenging in the context of their own understandings and awareness of both privilege (of some parents, teachers, and students) and the vulnerability faced by Indigenous students and their families. This highlighted the importance of examining this issue further with colleagues in a future PD session, so they could share constructive ways of responding to the resistance. There was recognition “it is not just Indigenous people that need to be decolonized”, and that “anti-racist education and anti-oppressive perspective should be for everyone.” (D.4)

There was concern that the AEPD plan might not gain traction and it would end up being a one-off, especially in tight budgetary times. Participants reinforced the value and appreciation of the AEPD Plan, claiming they felt nurtured and supported in their own learning and practice as leaders working in diverse school communities and challenging socio-economic contexts in their schools (D.4).

**Challenges and Opportunities, Sustaining the Work and Risk Assessment**

In the course of the interviews and conversation with principal players, the efficacy of “open door” policy—the self-selecting premise of membership in SJDC and fluidity of members attending sessions was reinforced as a critical feature, despite its challenges. The Leadership Development Team explored possible ways of mitigating the challenges/risks associated with the ‘open door’ policy, such as: preparing guidelines that places the onus of responsibility on members in how they enter and participate in the circle they have joined. In context, I referenced *Open Space Technology* as a possible resource for constructing guidelines. *Open Space Technology* processes hold similar assumptions for creating learning environments when people with different interests are coming together for similar goals (Herman, no date). An additional feature noted was the safety created by the ability to choose which critical friends members want to sit with in the sessions. This feature creates the opportunity to have real conversations and to fill in gaps of knowledge through colleagues who attend on a regular basis.

The Leadership Development Team observed that while “there is also a risk that an openness to join might be a resume-filler, the end result may be a positive one.” “There is always the fear of backlash, but modeling the safe space for open conversation and seeking support from those whose eyes light up can carry the work a long way.” (D.1)

On a different note, a key challenge for participation has been sub-release, especially for K-8 staff. In the context of budgetary constraints, shifting meetings to latter part of the day was one way of accommodating this challenge. Other questions asked aloud early in the conversations were: How do we expand learning opportunity for more people? Is it necessary to come on site? What are possibilities for online learning? Does everyone need to take this program? These are questions that need to be monitored and eventually answered as the AEPD Plan matures and progresses. As noted earlier, the focus group
provided some insight into the question of expanding the opportunity to others. It would seem wise to move slowly on expanding the professional development program, as critical elements like the knowledge, skill, and disposition of a Leadership Development Team and its expertise are key ingredients. For example, expansion may require dedicated staff at the school division level to ensure its success. The organic, discursive nature of the learning ‘plan’ suggests that a face-to-face interaction is the ideal. Could expansion of the PD plan into the schools be organic through the leadership (of principals and vice-principals) at the school level, as they gain confidence to model and initiate learning conversations on anti-racist education?

Given the nature of the work, which can quickly become politicized, as the city of Saskatoon and Calgary Public Board of Education can attest to, one of the important conversations held with the Leadership Development Team was on the topic of maintaining and sustaining the work. Their responses follow in the next section of this report as “lessons learned”.

Based on my observations, and as validated by the focus group, the knowledge, skill set, and disposition of the Leadership Development Team and expert cannot be underestimated for success of an initiative of this nature. Moreover, the challenges of having conversations about systemic racism in society and in systems require courage, leadership, and commitment from all levels of an organization – and perhaps more so now in the current climate of intolerance and rising nationalism worldwide.

**Most Significant Accomplishments and Lessons Learned**

The AEPD Plan or initiative has allowed leaders in SPS to explore their own commitment to social justice. Leaders in SPS are actually talking about racism as a system. Anti-racist education has created the discourse and opened the conversation. It has created the potential for taking the conversation to other groups such as vice-principals and teachers. Through stories shared anecdotally, it has created success in relationships with students and community members. It has created a tremendous opportunity and hope for people craving to understand the change required post TRC and its calls to action (D.1).

To ascertain lessons learned, I asked the Leadership Development Team to respond to the following question: In context of Indspire’s Nurturing Capacity program, what advice might be provided to other school divisions contemplating this work? Their advice was as follows:

- First and foremost, it is important that “leadership for social justice” is supported by senior leadership throughout the organization;
- The senior leadership of the organization is a part of and informed of evolving developments, and is open to the evolving understandings of the changes required at various levels of an organization to effect change for social justice.
Adopt a strong philosophical framework to provide direction, values and principles:

- An open invitation for learning to the leadership group so those who come see a need, are on their own learning journey, and want to see change;
- Build on the successes of your school division—SPS already has history with cultural competency initiatives and processes, which allows people to be vulnerable;

Enlist a Development Team to provide leadership and support internally—a team willing to lead in a different way—one committed to holistic learning for leaders, who will:

- Navigate the culture of an organization, specifically the system’s decision-making structures and organizational protocols;
- Demonstrate they value the different learning journey of each individual;
- Engage as learners walking alongside leaders and providing different entry points;
- Create a safe space for leaders to make themselves vulnerable — a recognition that we are all on the same learning journey, trying to achieve the same ends of becoming effective leaders that support teachers in their own learning and effectiveness in the learning environment teachers create in their classrooms, so all student succeed;
- Operate with an understanding that the learning/unlearning of personal beliefs and values, and rethinking of institutional policies and practices, and societal hegemony giving rise to and reinforcing marginalization and exclusionary practices may surface emotions for all, including the team members themselves;
- Be aware of the effect that such changes may have on a system so that it can respond in an appropriate way.

Ensure the Leadership Development Team providing leadership and support is diverse, inclusive of First Nations, Métis [and Inuit] leaders from the system (and/or externally), and positional leaders from senior leadership in the organization;

The Leadership Development Team demonstrates respect and reciprocity within its own group - there must be a feeling of safety within a team, so honest communication must be the norm;

Enlist an ally, like Dr. Verna St Denis, to bring the theory (knowledge and discourse of anti-racist education) into leaders’ thinking and imaginations;

Enlist other allies with knowledge and skills to support work, internally and externally;

Ensure there are processes by design: to navigate the shift from theory to practice; to nurture the ebb and flow of learning and unlearning, which is an expected feature of deep learning; create a framework to support this type of work and learning; and be aware of the risks and challenges;
▪ Address guidelines for coming and going, supported by a strong philosophical foundation;
▪ Promote on-going dialogue internally about the initiative;
▪ Enlist support and expertise in technology to share key documents, readings, and results from reflections/conversations tracked.

Next Steps, and Implications for Leadership and Research etc.

Saskatoon Public Schools have demonstrated courageous leadership in their professional learning program on anti-racist education for leaders. While it may be too early to judge the success of the initiative, it has succeeded on the first count of creating a safe and open collegial learning environment: to discuss racism and its impact on leaders’ thinking and decision-making and, more profoundly, on their relationship with Indigenous students, their parents, and communities at large (D.3; D.4). Much of this has to be attributed to the leadership provided by the SJDC Leadership Development Team, who are not only versed in the literature (knowledgeable), but are committed and skilled anti-racism educators who walk their talk. Senior administrative leadership representation on the team has also been its strength. This representation has provided an important link to the decision-makers and decision-making structures of the school system. It may become all the more important when the outcome of learning conversations challenge systemic and existing practices in schools, and in the system.

The AEPD Plan is in its early stages of development. The conversations to map and evaluate this project have provided a rich, philosophical foundation, clear outcomes – short and long-term, to frame its ongoing efforts. The Plan aligns strongly with SPS Leadership for Learning Program, and an evolving, holistic leadership paradigm and leading for social justice literature (Kenny et al, 2012; Ruderman et al, 2014). This conversation should continue. It will be important to continue to build on shared understanding of this framework and to strengthen critical aspects of the plan to address the challenges associated with an open, fluid learning community on anti-racist education. The plan could also strengthen its articulation for on-going monitoring and assessment of the initiative through its existing comprehensive assessment and monitoring systems.

Reaching out to community resources and allies to support its efforts has also been an important feature of this initiative. It underscores that we are all on a learning journey of transformation that may be required of each of us and of our institutions to create welcoming spaces for belonging and success for Indigenous students, and the learning that needs to be fostered among all students for creating a shared future in our province and our country. The AEPD Plan’s practice to situate learning on the examination of influences and lived experiences of leaders is also its strength. It amplifies what “leading for social justice” means awareness of systemic, marginalizing conditions in society; it requires leadership, advocacy, vision and practices built upon processes of respect, care, recognition, and empathy.
In this effort, SPS has clearly articulated its intentions, responsibility, and commitment – not only to the policies adopted in the name of Aboriginal education in the province and its own priorities, but also to the calls to action by the landmark Truth and Reconciliation Commission examining residential schools in Canada. In the course of carrying out this research/evaluation, a question arose about whether there might be overlaps or gaps among SPS “social justice” initiatives (see the description of the initiatives provided in the section on ‘Performance Indicators and Measures”). Unfortunately, this research project did not have the scope to review all the initiatives in depth; as such the report cannot offer informed insights or observations of possible overlaps or gaps. At minimum, SPS may be well served to articulate the focus and interface of its social justice initiatives as a means of understanding and explaining them to its employees. To reiterate, the AEDP Plan is unique in its focus on leaders and leadership and its examination of self, “Whiteness”, on power and privilege in society. The AEPD Plan is premised on a belief that ‘a certain disposition’ in the “human resources” of an organization can make a difference in the educational success of Indigenous children and youth. Only time and stories of transformation like those shared during AEPD events by the SJDC members and in the focus group conducted as part of this project can capture the complexity of this multi-layered learning initiative. Such personal stories should be captured and shared with other educational leaders, and more widely as a legacy in this time of reconciliation. This would make for an excellent research project, by one of the leaders, at some future date.
Selected References


Appendix A: Evaluation Plan - Saskatoon Public Schools Anti-Racist Education Professional Development Plan

Laying the Groundwork - Relationship Building and Gaining a Broad Overview of the Anti-Racist Education Professional Development (AEPD) Plan to Support Planning and Actions

Initial communication and conversations were held with the principal players of the Saskatoon Public Schools (SPS), the University of Saskatchewan, and Social Justice Disposition Committee (SJDC) Development Team of the PD Plan on December 1st and 4th. This step included taking into consideration the transitions of both principal players and facilitation team members that have occurred. As stated by the superintendent of education, Dean Newton, transitions and change is a continuous feature of the school division—in both its staff and programming. It is the normal course of events for a large school division such as Saskatoon Public Schools. I also had the opportunity to attend and experience a half-day PD event at Chief Whitecap School on December 5, 2017.

A draft copy of the Planned Evaluation Framework will be shared with principal players at initial meetings and feedback incorporated in the final copy submitted to Indspire.

A form letter, which outlines the purpose of the research/evaluation project and ethical guidelines to be observed as part of the research/evaluation project, will be utilized in initial communications and meetings with informants/participants (attached).

Qualitative Data

The data collected to describe and evaluate SPS - AEPD Plan will include information gained from the initial conversations and communications describing the plan, individual interviews, and group interviews with the SJDC Development Team. This will be followed by in-depth focus groups with members of SJDC, selected by the Leadership Development Team of the AEPD Plan. The purpose of the interviews and focus groups is to gain understanding of key facets of the AEPD Plan as required by Indspire’s Nurturing Capacity project criteria and guidelines, and to describe the plan in a such a way that SPS “will be able to share their project with education stakeholders across the country through Indspire’s virtual K-12 Indspire Institute.” These focused interviews and conversations will inform the following areas:

- Background and history of the AEPD Plan, and its fit in the overall vision and plan of SPS;
- Challenges, opportunities, and risks associated with the plan;
- The ultimate goal it seeks to achieve, and its intended short to long-term outcomes;
- Major activities (including resources utilized and created to support work);
- Performance indicators and/or criteria for measuring its success and renewal;
- Structures created to sustain and monitor the professional development plan;
▪ The vision and/or principles and values guiding the plan;
▪ Impact of the PD Plan on participants and/or lessons learned; and
▪ Anticipated next steps to move the AEPD Plan forward.

The impact/value of the AEPD Plan will be validated and assessed on the professional plan’s stated performance indicators along with the relevant foundational guiding principles adopted by Indspire for Indigenous educational practice. Although SPS’s vision and priorities align with almost all of the principles, the most relevant principle that applies directly to this initiative is Principle 7, which states:

Recognizing the legacy of the colonial histories of Indigenous peoples, education is also a process of decolonization, which seeks to strengthen, enhance and embrace Indigenous Knowledge and experience through various strategies including but not limited to anti-racist, anti-oppressive pedagogies and Indigenous pedagogies.

Methodology

The methodologies utilized by the researcher will privilege community and relationship building, utilizing critical dialogue and storytelling as principal methods of collecting data during the interviews, and with focus groups to garner the impact of the PD Plan for members of the SJDC Leadership Group (Brown and Strega, 2005).

1. Individual Interviews & Focus Groups - Question Bank
Applying critical Indigenous theory, an adapted Logic Model will be utilized as the framework to guide the dialogue and conversations. The adapted Logic Model is utilized to conceptualize and communicate the change effort of SPS “to nurture capacity” that will benefit First Nations, Métis and Inuit students, and ultimately, all students. It will invite clear articulation of the changes SPS hope to bring about through its efforts to include such factors as: with and/or for whom; its philosophical premise to include vision and guiding principles, and/or values; the activities planned and the resources required to contribute to change; the assumptions the organization is making and its considerations of both historical, and external and internal environmental factors that could influence the change effort. The latter is examined through a strength-based assets lens and the historical realities affecting the communities served by SPS efforts for change (Cajete, 2015; W.K. Kellogg Logic Model Foundation Development Guide 2004).

The results will be captured at the end of each interview/conversation and/or focus group, and reviewed by individuals and/or groups in the meetings to follow, to ensure key ideas and concepts captured reflect the consensus of the conversations to date. As such, the following questions are intended to create shared understandings about the plan by the SPS - AEPD Plan and its value to the participants in their practice as leaders. This researcher’s goal is to carry out this work in relationship with SPS principal players and SJDC Development Team, and Indspire staff. This will mean demonstrating flexibility and authenticity in the way interactions are conducted, and the conversations held to describe and evaluate the plan. Planning for change, in both communities and organizations, is understood to be an iterative and dynamic process; therefore the questions that follow are not cast in stone, nor are the components in planning for change necessarily sequential.

2. Examining Context: History, Needs and Aspirations, Interests, Challenges and Opportunities, Assumptions, Potential and Risk Assessment

- What precipitated the focus on anti-racist education for your school division?
- Why is it important for your system to engage in this professional development plan?
- How did you engage your colleagues to take up this work?
- Who are the members? What is their responsibility in the system?
- How were they selected?
- Who have you engaged, internally and externally, to support you in this work?
- How did you determine the core learning experiences for the PD program?
- In what way does this theme-focus of your PD Plan support the mission/vision of your school division?
- What have been the challenges, constraints, and risks facing the project? How did you deal with them?
3. Articulating Intended Results: Outcomes - Short to Long Term and Ultimate Goal or Impact
   ▪ What was the ultimate goal you hoped to achieve?
   ▪ What were some of possible short to long-term outcomes?

4. Describing the Planned Work: Major Activities, Strategies, Resources, Components or Functions
   ▪ How did/will you meet your ultimate goal, and short to long-term outcomes?
   ▪ What strategies and/or actions did/will you take to get there?
   ▪ What was your timeline?
   ▪ What were the key resources utilized or created? Are these available as a link/resource for others who may wish to take up similar work?

5. Sustaining the Work with Partner(s): Roles and Responsibilities, Monitoring and Evaluation, and Supporting Structures
   ▪ How will SPS assess progress to ensure it stays on track? What has worked? Not worked?
   ▪ What structures did you create to ensure the sustainability of the PD Plan? What other structures might you create to ensure the sustainability of this work? What are the roles and responsibilities of the partners? Who is doing what, when?
   ▪ How might you strengthen the structures and relationships fostered as a result of this initiative?

6. Guiding Vision & Principles and Values: Philosophical Foundations of Initiative
   ▪ What is the guiding vision?
   ▪ What are guiding principles and values?
   ▪ How do you envision the change to occur?

7. Results/Achievements: Contributing Factors for Success, Lessons Learned, and Next Steps
   ▪ How successful have you been in the implementation of your plan? What are contributing factors (internal and external) that have had an impact or contributed to your success?
   ▪ What lessons have been learned?
   ▪ What are the next steps?

8. Other: Implications for Leadership, Research etc.
- What are the implications for leadership (present and future)? What advice would you give to other school divisions in Canada taking up similar work?
- What are implications for research?
- Any other questions I should have asked, and didn’t?

**Key Informants for Interviews and Focus Groups**

**Lead for the Project**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Notes to Self</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brenda Green</td>
<td>Superintendent of Ed, Initial Lead</td>
<td>SPS (resigned</td>
<td>Email Dec 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>June 30, 2017)</td>
<td>Jan 8-18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dean Newton</td>
<td>Superintendent of Education, Lead</td>
<td>SPS</td>
<td>Dec 1, 4-17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Advisor and Expert/Critical Friend**

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Notes to Self</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Verna St Denis,</td>
<td>Principal Knowledge Specialist</td>
<td>University of Sask.</td>
<td>Jan 9-18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Development Team of AEPD Plan**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Notes to Self</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mary Bishop</td>
<td>Development Team</td>
<td>SPS</td>
<td>Dec 4-17, Jan 31-18, Feb 8-18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deighan Remoundos</td>
<td>Development Team</td>
<td>SPS</td>
<td>Dec 4-17, Jan 31-18, Feb 8-18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alisa Favel</td>
<td>Development Team</td>
<td>SPS</td>
<td>Dec 4-17, Jan 31-18, Feb 8-18</td>
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**Focus Group- Conversation Circle**

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Notes to Self</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focus Group</td>
<td>Social Justice Disposition Committee Members</td>
<td>SPS</td>
<td>June 11, 2018</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Focus Group Guide

The following questions will be used to guide the dialogue:

Introductory Circle

▪ Introduce yourself and describe the context (historical, social, economic, and political) of your school/community.
▪ How often did you attend the PD sessions?

Conversation Circle 1

▪ In what ways have the PD opportunities in anti-racist education changed your mindset?
▪ What supports and/or hinders your learning? What advice would you give to the Development Team?

Conversation Circle 2

▪ What do you feel are the greatest benefits to you as a leader of this PD initiative? What challenges does it present for you as learner and leader?
▪ Do the short to long-term, and ultimate goals expressed for leaders in the program hit the mark?

Professional Development Sessions

Researcher will participate in the following PD sessions:

▪ Chief Whitecap School, December 5, 2017
▪ Sylvia Fedoruk School, February 6, 2018

Other

<table>
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<tr>
<th>What</th>
<th>Who</th>
<th>Notes to Self</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AEPD Committee</td>
<td>Members in AEPD Plan</td>
<td>Data provided by AEPD Plan Development Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(numbers, gender, FN/Métis, assignment in the system, years of experience etc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials and resources</td>
<td>Principal players</td>
<td>Data provided by AEPD Plan Development Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(created and accessed)</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
Quantitative Data
The degree of impact on student learning by the AEPD Plan will be difficult to assess at this early juncture, and to isolate from the myriad of initiatives directed in supporting student learning. Quantitative data provided by SPS as part of a Nurturing Capacity initiative of their Leadership for Learning framework in 2015-16 will be applied as a baseline for future evaluations of the AEPD Plan. In our planning conversations, we have been exploring various measures and ways that might be utilized to gauge SPS central office and school administrative leaders' learning and growth. This may include the integration of questions into the current tools that SPS utilizes to monitor and assess progress toward achieving its stated goals and priorities, which includes success for First Nations and Métis students. It might also include pre and post (interval based) narratives on key aspects of the learning program—processes that have proven to be useful in anti-racism education learning contexts to measure/monitor personal growth for each individual or the group.

The success of Indigenous students is one of the central premises of SPS professional development supports and processes for teachers and leaders. As part of its monitoring and assessment program, SPS gathers from various sources to monitor its year to year progress. Captured below is a composite of the various data SPS collects to monitor and report its progress.

1. Students

SPS gathers the following data to monitor students' year to year progress:

- Comparative data on graduation rates of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students,
- Comparative data on student engagement for Grade 4 to 8 students based on their own self-reported expectations of success, effective learning and truancy of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students (based on provincial Tell Them From Me Survey).
- Comparative data on student's aspirations for post-secondary education of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students,
- Comparative data to assess students' emotional and social development based on their self-reported feelings of safety at school, sense of belonging, developing positive peer relationships, self-esteem, and experiencing levels of anxiety and depression.

2. Administrators
As an aspect of its Leadership for Learning Program, SPS utilizes two self-assessment tools to gauge progress of its school and central staff administrators, including coordinators and consultants, toward meeting the SPS strategic goals and priorities. The Cultural Competency Continuum is based on a rubric created by SPS. Saskatoon Public Schools uses the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) to assess intercultural competence—ability to shift cultural perspective and to adapt behaviour to cultural differences and commonalities. The IDI is a 50-item online questionnaire. Employers
utilizing the instrument can add six customized questions. The instrument assesses five core *mindsets* that explore approaches for engaging in cultural diversity in the workplace.

Assessment for administrators is based on SPS’s Leadership for Learning Program (LLP) framework, which is shared through Indspire’s Nurturing Capacity program. This is a recent initiative of the SPS to create “a learning community that is caring, committed to celebrating diversity, and respected for its focus on learning.” Performance of administrators is assessed against competencies relative to the four central concepts connecting leadership action to student learning success.

The four central concepts are as follows:

- Sharing Leadership and Building Strong Teams.
- Ensuring Expected Practice: Participating in Curriculum, Instruction and 4 Assessments
- Setting and Living Priorities: Focused, Resolute Action.
- Leading and Engaging in Professional Learning: Stimulating Inquiry.

All new administrators also receive feedback through this process to develop their leadership capacities (Bourassa, 2017, p.25; Jutras, 2016, p.27-28).

3. Teaching Staff
Teaching staffs participate in a self-assessment of their schools based on eight aspects driving student learning, and proven through research to directly correlate to student achievement.

**Selected Resources to Inform Work**
The final report will reflect the results of the evaluation, and where applicable, will be supported by research literature relevant to the key concepts and ideas informing the plan, the methodology, and the results of the evaluation.
Appendix B: Social Justice Disposition Committee Terms of Reference

Description of Committee:
The creation of the Social Justice Disposition Committee is the result of the qualitative feedback by senior leaders directly pertaining to the book *The Comeback* by John Ralston-Saul. Senior leaders have requested for the “need” to know how history has impacted our current state, with an opportunity for the committee to provide deliverables on the “now what” to provide the best learning environment possible for student success with a concerted focus on First Nations and Métis students.

Outcome:
Provide supports for Saskatoon Public School’s senior leaders to further develop a social justice mindset through strength based action-oriented deliverables that directly impact students in the classroom, and to establish best practice for our First Nations, Métis, and Inuit learners.

Actions:

- Provide professional development to senior staff with an opportunity to examine beliefs, as well as the origins of those beliefs (history, colonization, and repurposing beliefs) through reflection, discussion, and critical analysis that can be shared with and used by all staff.
- Develop professional development strategies that provide theory and practical action application involving current and future Saskatoon Public School’s staff.
- Provide resources and supports for educators that are sustainable— starting with the basics and building deeper understandings over time.

Internal reflections for committee to be aware of:

- Collect narratives from leaders; eventually our teachers will be able to answer: “why are we here?” “How did we get here?”
- Narratives could be included in resource materials
- Handbook premised on narratives = practical application examples
- Start with guest speakers at leadership tables and have these people at our tables
- Challenge leadership to question, explore or change practice by employing a different lens in which to view our current situation
- Create ways for leadership to see themselves in this work
- Commit to change existing structures to reflect the benefits of acknowledging different ways of doing business and ways of knowing
- Not to push this work too quickly, as it will become superficial and will not be deep learning
  - We are changing core beliefs and this is what takes time
Appendix C: Indspire Evaluation Research Communication & Consent Forms

Communication Re: Invitation to participate in the Evaluation Research Project of the Saskatoon Public Schools Anti-Racist Education Professional Development Plan

Dear [INSERT NAME]:

My name is Rita Bouvier and I am the Lead Researcher for the evaluation research project. This is a joint research project between Saskatoon Public Board of Education and Indspire. I will be working with you, as researcher, to map and evaluate the Saskatoon Public Schools - Anti-Racist Education Professional Development Plan, applying an adaptation of the Logic Model as part of the Evaluation Framework planned for this project. Along with this model, relevant Indigenous foundational principles developed by Indspire will be utilized in the evaluation, along with the plan’s stated performance indicators, if possible.

I am inviting you to participate in this evaluation research project (either in an individual or a group setting). The purpose of the study is to evaluate the Saskatoon Public Schools - Anti-Racist Education Professional Development Plan initiative for Indspire’s Nurturing Capacity program. Participation is completely voluntary and your decision to participate or not participate will in no way affect your existing relationships, work situation or provision of services.

All the information you provide will be considered confidential. As well, prior to starting the session you will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement to indicate that you will respect the confidentiality of the interviewed discussion or dialogue.

As an aspect of design in this collaborative research project, you will have the opportunity to review draft findings and results in the course of the research and evaluation, and will have an opportunity to view the final draft report prior to submission to Indspire, to ensure it accurately reflects the project’s purpose, outcomes and strategies, and your feedback. Please note that results of this study may be published in professional journals, presented at conferences, and on Indspire’s website.

A draft of the planned evaluation framework and guide is attached for your information, including the names and/or category of the participants informing both the mapping and the evaluation of the project.

If you have any questions about this study or require further information, please contact me at 306-299-7133 or at rita.bouvier@usask.ca.

Sincerely,
Rita Bouvier
INDIVIDUAL CONSENT
(Please print or write legibly)

Name, and role in the [INSERT PROGRAM NAME] of the individual/Personnel,
Student (over 18), Community Member, Elder/Knowledge Keeper:

Name: _________________________________________________________________

Role: __________________________________________________________________

I agree to participate in this study described above. I have made this decision based on
the aforementioned information.

I have had the opportunity to receive any additional details I wanted regarding the
research and understand I may ask questions in the future.

NAME: _________________________________

SIGNATURE:___________________________ DATE: ____________________________
GROUP CONSENT
(Please print or write legibly)

Name, and role in the [INSERT PROGRAM NAME] of the individual/Personnel, Student (over 18), Community Member, Elder/Knowledge Keeper:

Name: _________________________________________________________________

Role: __________________________________________________________________

I agree to participate in this study described above. I have made this decision based on the aforementioned information.

I have had the opportunity to receive any additional details I wanted regarding the research and understand I may ask questions in the future.

NAME: ______________________________

SIGNATURE: ________________________ DATE: _______________________________
Appendix D: Listing of Data Sources

D.1 Summary Data from Interviews and Conversations (Principal Informants)
D.2 Web Portal Resource Bank (Meetings, Readings, Processes, Summary Reflections)
D.3 Summary of Leader as Learner Conversations Feb 6, 2018
D.4 Summary of Focus Groups - Conversation Circles June 11, 2018
### Appendix E: Logic Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ULTIMATE GOAL</th>
<th>Leadership for social justice leading to systemic change in the educational system.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LONG TERM OUTCOMES</td>
<td>Creating spaces/places of authentic learning for Indigenous students, and seeing the humanity of Indigenous people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEDIUM TERM OUTCOMES</td>
<td>Influencing teachers to undertake the leadership required in their classrooms and schools. Opening doors as allies and supporting the work of teachers engaged in innovative and transformative teaching practices in the school and community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHORT TERM OUTCOMES</td>
<td>Increase understanding of systemic conditions and barriers to learning. Critically examining thinking and practices that reproduce oppression and inequity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INPUTS</td>
<td>Sufficient funding to cover expenses. Expertise to provide a strong theoretical knowledge base. Time and space for leaders, as a community of learners, to pursue learning in anti-racist education. Knowledgeable, skilled, and committed staff providing leadership. Effective internal and external communication.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACTIVITIES</td>
<td>Core learning experiences based on learning needs and aspirations of the learners, through lectures, video presentations, and readings. Discursive discourse processes that promote deep thinking, meaning-making, critical analysis, and empathy: “Unpacking” the why of certain beliefs, values, discourses embedded in every day practices, and who benefits. Exploration of real life questions and issues of cultural and social significance affecting the learning environments of Indigenous students. Reflecting on individual and collective growth as a community of leaders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OUTPUTS (PERFORMANCE)</td>
<td>Completion of Grade 12 and increased graduation rates for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students. Transformative classroom and school environments - space/place of authentic learning experiences for Indigenous students, and about Indigenous people. Holistic learning and growth of leaders in SPS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASSUMPTIONS</td>
<td>Willing partners and allies. Commitment by the Board of Education and senior administrative leadership. Shared leadership and commitment to SPS vision and strategic goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATION</td>
<td>SPS is “a learning community that is caring, committed to celebrating diversity, and respected for its focus on learning.” A self-selecting, welcoming, safe, open learning environment for all staff. Real-life, courageous conversations. Supporting innovative, and transformative teaching and practice in the classrooms and schools.</td>
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AEPD Plan Logic Model