

The Including Ourselves in the Change Equation (IOCE):

Personal Learning for Organizational Performance

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Abstract

The Including Ourselves in the Change Equation (IOCE): Personal Learning for Organizational Performance course was a non-traditional learning process with several paradigm shifts in thinking to align to my personal change goals as a school district administrator. I was afforded the opportunity to peel the layers of my motives with prescriptive feedback that reveal the self-sabotaging tendencies that hinder my personal changes, and will enable me to grow into an effective transformative educational leadership researcher and impact meaningful change.

**The Including Ourselves in the Change Equation (IOCE): Personal Learning for
Organizational Performance**

Week One: Personal Improvement Goals

My first personal improvement goal is that as a transformative school leader, I continually strive to ensure that the elements of the system (curriculum, instruction, and assessment) connect and align to my school's vision and mission. This is my first year working with three other administrators in a middle school and I am challenged to bridge the gap among curriculum, instruction and assessment to ensure that students transition smoothly to high school and become college and/or career ready.

My second personal improvement goal is that as an Instructional Specialist for three years responsible for instruction in 55 schools, ranging from elementary, middle, high, alternative and charter schools, I have demonstrated leadership skills that allow for others to grow in environments of supportive accountability to identify areas of concern and need, and serve as the basis for short and long range planning.

My leadership experience also includes being successful in increasing student achievement, as well as supervising Reading, Math and Science academic coaches, Learning Team Facilitators (LTF), Resource and Response to Intervention (RtI) teachers. In this capacity, I have also been successful in creating collegial communities, developing a strong sense of relationship among teachers, parents and students, enhancing teaching and learning, and monitoring the fidelity of implementation of state and district educational reform initiatives. I have also built a solid foundation for implementation of the Florida Standards to ensure that

teachers, parents and students are prepared for the Florida Standards Assessment (FSA), college and beyond.

My preliminary pre-goal brainstorm is that I would like to be a more transformative school leader. I have asked for feedback from my peers on other possible goals. Specifically, I have asked, “given how well you know my work, if I could get significantly better at just one thing, what would you suggest that one thing should be?” The people who know me well think that I should focus on building the trust of the teachers. They thought that my brainstormed list of goals were appropriate and relevant. They also mentioned to be myself and let the positive rapport with teachers turn trust come on its own and not be forced. They make sense to me.

My final pre-goal brainstorm is that I would like to be a more transformative school leader. My improvement goal is important to me because the students need further direction when it comes to data discussions and knowing what needs to be the focus for academic improvement. This is my first year as an administrator at Bak Middle School of the Arts. I am still learning the school culture and how I can make it more productive. I have initiated student-centered data discussion meetings. However, the staff is resistant to this student-centered focus since the majority of students are on grade-level. I took a collaborative approach where ideas were free to be discussed. My big assumption is that if I assume that if I let the teachers not rise to their readiness level, then, I will inevitably fail as a transformative school leader and the students will be at a disadvantage.

The teachers are not prepared to teach the students at the rigor of the state assessment level for the academic year at school. This will result in students not achieving a year's worth of

growth in their academics and will adversely affect their pupil progression to the next grade level. My big assumptions “in action” observations are:

1. Teachers that do not understand the content limits of the state assessment and teach below the rigor of the grade level and state assessment.
2. Students fall behind in proficiency.
3. Students do not progress to the next grade level and are retained.

My big assumptions “surprisingly absent” observations are:

1. Teachers understand the content limits of the state assessment and teach at or above the rigor of the grade level and state assessment.
2. Students achieve proficiency.
3. Students progress to the next grade level.

Week Two: Completing Your Immunity to Change Map

My own psychological immune system works to protect me from danger by alerting me to potential roadblocks when fostering a positive school culture. These roadblocks include the teachers’ lack of training and stipulations in the teacher union contract that hinder progress towards effective student achievement. The agreement was negotiated by the Classroom Teachers Association (CTA) and the School District of Palm Beach County (SDPBC). The parts of the CTA contract specifically relate to compensation, benefit and professional development. These stipulations are both a help and a hindrance to my improvement goal progress and I am in agreement with the target prompt oxymoron of “your foot on the brakes and on the gas.”

The extended school day allows for an increase in teacher professional development to pursue ideas and research-based best practices that work but the funding source is a struggle for

Title 1 schools that already have shrinking budgets. In my worry box, I do not factor in the readiness level of the teachers. If I were to consider doing the opposite of each of those behaviors in column 2, I worry about their growth needed because they are not at the appropriate readiness level. My hidden commitment is that I am committed to not looking stupid, which is derived from my fears. It is simple to misunderstand the commitment because it sounds like it should be aligned to my goal.

My hidden commitment is strong and thus makes gives me discomfort in attaining my goals. In my opinion, it makes me weak and removes the shield that deflects negativity. The hidden commitments presents a forum for realization of imminent danger. My hidden commitment reflects my commitment to self-protection and show why each of the column 2 behaviors (Doing / Not Doing Instead) makes good sense. In questioning my big assumption, it allowed me to realize that it may not always be true and allowed me to move it from something that is transparent to something that is visible.

The value of discovering that my big assumption is not always true is that I was able to make progress towards my improvement goal, begin to let go of my hidden goals, change my psychic immune system and see the world more precisely. In my map, my pre-goal brainstorm (column 0) was learning strategies to become a more effective transformative school leader. My improvement goal (column 1) was that I am committed to getting better at creating a positive school environment. My doing/not doing instead (column 2) was that I do not factor in the readiness level of teachers. My hidden commitments (column 3) is made up of my worry box, where I worry about their growth needed because they are not at the appropriate readiness level.

My hidden commitment is that I am committed to not looking stupid. I assume that if I let the teachers not rise to their readiness level, then, I will inevitably fail as a transformative school leader and the students would be at a disadvantage as my big assumption. My big assumption makes my column 3 commitment necessary and has a big time bad conclusion as it feels real to me. The entries that I chose tell a coherent story across the four columns. They meet the criteria and have distinct connections among every column.

Week Three: Self Observations

I was able to observe my big assumptions in the self observations phase. The assumptions played a vital role in my decision-making. I had a paradigm shift and viewed introspectively as someone who assumes, and these assumptions permeated my daily life. I was also able to differentiate between my assumptions and myself, which set me up to focus on my assumptions and its significant impact on my daily life. I was able to pinpoint the occurrences in both my personal and professional lives to hone in on observing what occurs and does not occur when my big assumption is perceived as truth.

The value of collecting examples of “in action” and “surprisingly absent” is that they assisted me in determining patterns about what typically activates my big assumption, allowed me to become more aware of my thoughts and feelings in as it was happening, and began to overturn my immune system to identify other big assumptions. The main purpose of in action self-observations was to learn what activated my big assumption, improve operating “under the influence” of my big assumption and keeping tabs on how my big assumption may be operating in other facets of my life.

I was able to avoid potential pitfalls when conducting my “in-action” self-observations. I was careful not to alter how I typically act, observe for several big assumptions, observe whether or not I acted consistently with my improvement goal and taking note of what activated my big assumption. I was also successful in resisting the temptation for immediate change and observe patterns associated with my big assumption to determine if there were situations where it manifested more frequently. Any triggers to my big assumption were were also taken into consideration. The big assumption that I felt had the biggest impact on my immunity change map was that I assume that if I let the teachers not rise to their readiness level, then, I will inevitably fail as a transformative school leader, and the students would be at a disadvantage. I observed clues that triggered my big assumption to observe it in action.

In recording my observations, I first had to witness my big assumption in action. In holding my big assumption as true, the teachers are not prepared to teach the students at the rigor of the state assessment level for the academic year at school. This will result in students not achieving a year's worth of growth in their academics and will adversely affect their pupil progression to the next grade level.

I have observed that:

1. Teachers that do not understand the content limits of the state assessment and teach below the rigor of the grade level and state assessment.
2. Students fall behind in proficiency.
3. Students do not progress to the next grade level and are retained.

In the absence of my big assumption, my observations were that:

1. Teachers understand the content limits of the state assessment and teach at or above the

rigor of the grade level and state assessment.

2. Students achieve proficiency.

3. Students progress to the next grade level.

The big idea self-observation data in action was very astounding. The revelation was that teachers are not prepared to teach the students at the rigor of the state assessment level for the academic year at school. This will result in students not achieving a year's worth of growth in their academics and will adversely affect their pupil progression to the next grade level. I notice above all that student achievement is adversely affected. The thoughts, feelings, perspectives, actions, and choices that I experience as a consequence of my big assumption is that it makes me feel like I have failed as a transformative leader.

The patterns that I notice that activate my big assumption are that teachers are not willing to attend professional development to grow in their knowledge of the assessment, pedagogy and content. One revelation is that I need to motivate teachers to attend professional development to grow in their knowledge of the assessment, pedagogy and content. My key take-aways were that I need to brainstorm ways to motivate teachers to attend professional development to grow in their knowledge of the assessment, pedagogy and content. The self-observation data “surprisingly absent” that is most noticeable is that teacher preparedness has a direct impact on student achievement.

My thoughts are that I feel like I know what I need to do to impact teacher preparedness and consequently student achievement. The pattern observed is the direct correlation between teacher preparedness and student achievement. I acted differently than my big assumption would have me act because I took ownership of my role as an administrator. The counter-data suggests

that teacher preparedness directly affects student achievement. It is my belief that I became more objective about my big assumption by observing it happening, and learning about what activates it. I was able to distance myself from by learning what does not trigger my big assumption and that is is not always factual.

Week Four: Continuum of Progress

During Week 4, I was able to write my Continuum (Picture) of Progress, where it was pictured that I did not give in to my big assumption. It provided real-world engagement. In order to complete the Continuum of Progress (COP), I had to think about the behaviors, thoughts and emotions while pursuing my goal and releasing the big assumption. It was another paradigm shift in both thinking and skills in attaining my goal. I have witnessed the impact of my self-observations on doing or not doing certain actions and if I were not subject to my big assumption, since is may not be considered truth.

The main purpose of the Continuum of Progress activity was to imagine a "future me" who is freed of my big assumption and is able to act consistently to meet my improvement goal and is able to act consistently to meet my improvement goal. The Continuum of Progress and self-observations activities were similar because they both require no new action to be taken, help to be more objective about the big assumption and involve me and and how I think, feel, and act. Before I started focusing on success, I reviewed my improvement goal, which was that I am committed to getting better at creating a productive school culture, and my big assumption that if I let the teachers not rise to their readiness level, then, I will inevitably fail as a transformative school leader, and the students would be at a disadvantage.

My vision of full success was that last year, I was at a low-performing school where the majority of students were not at the proficiency level or above on state assessments. I wish that I could wave a magic wand and get all students to proficiency. My vision of success would be getting the teachers prepared to teach at a high level of rigor to impact student achievement. My vision of full success showed me how to attain the most significant new behaviors that take me directly toward my goal and showed me as having the thoughts and feelings that most release me from my big assumption. My vision of full success showed a picture of a "future me" who has achieved my improvement goal. It depicted my new behaviors and the thoughts and feelings that supported them. It showed me thinking and feeling differently about my big assumption.

The link between the my thoughts and feelings and the behaviors should were clear since my big assumption was no longer affecting me in this controlling way, and I am able to display the behaviors that are synced with my improvement goal. My life might look differently as I started to make changes towards my goal. My life would be more target-driven since the school culture would be improved, and the teachers would be attending targeted professional development opportunities to develop core pedagogy and content strategies to increase student proficiency.

This vision is about small steps forward and taking them led me towards my desired picture of full success. The link between the feelings and the behaviors were clear because my big assumption had started to affect me less, and I am able to execute safe and modest behaviors that move me toward my improvement goal. Life may have looked much different as I began to take great strides towards achieving my goal because the quantitative score on the School Effectiveness Questionnaire (SEQ) will be improved by at least five percentage points from the

prior year (which is statistically significant). Overall student scores on the standardized assessments will be at 85% or higher.

Week Five: Designing Your First Test

In Week 5, I learned how to design a safe test to my big assumption to avoid limitations of my psychic immune system. This was the first step in designing my test to run it later, and analyze the data in the upcoming weeks. The S-M-A-R-T characteristics ensured that the experiment was safe, modest, actionable, research-driven, and tests my big idea. The main purpose of designing a test of my big assumption is to gather important information about its accuracy. Acceptable tests of my big assumption include the opposite of a behavior listed in column 2, asking someone I trust to observe me in a situation in which I purposely plan to modify my behavior, learning more about a behavior I would like to enact by reading about it, and watching someone else engage in a behavior in my Continuum of Progress and learning from that person's observation.

A few good ideas for how to create a test of my big assumption are changing one of the behaviors that I listed in column 2 (Doing and Not Doing) of my immunity to change map, doing something that runs counter to my column 3 hidden commitment, looking at my Continuum of Progress, and electing to do something that will move me further along. Other good ideas include using my big assumption as a starting point and figuring out what data would lead me to question it, then deciphering what safe and modest action could be taken soon to create that data, looking

at natural experiments that I experienced during my self-observation exercises (when I spontaneously behaved counter to how my big assumption would have me behave) and trying an intentional version of one of these.

The Continuum of Progress activity can assist in designing a test of a big assumption by looking at my Continuum of Progress to select to do something that will move me further along and finding an entry where I imagined myself moving towards my goal to determine if that meets the S-M-A-R-T criteria and if so, figure out the R (data) that should be collected. I collected data on what I actually did for my test, not just what happened when I did it, because I needed to determine if I ended up acting in a way that could generate data counter to my big assumption. My big assumption was is testable since I could identify the specific data that would call my big assumption into doubt and I can safely create the conditions that would generate those data.

The big assumption that I tested was that I assume that if I let the teachers not rise to their readiness level, then, I will inevitably fail as a transformative school leader, and the students would be at a disadvantage. It was vital to identify the kind of data that would disconfirm my big assumption and safely create the conditions that would generate the data that would call my big assumption into doubt. After looking at my observations, there were instances of my big assumption in action that I observed that I would now like to try to handle differently. There was an instance of a naturally occurring counter to my big assumption that I would now like to deliberately plan to do.

The possible test idea was that the School Effectiveness Questionnaire (SEQ) and the state assessment data led me to doubt my big assumption. If the School Effectiveness Questionnaire (SEQ) and the state assessment data increases, then the if-then sequence is true.

There was an instance of my big assumption in action that I observed that I would now like to try to handle differently, which is motivating the teachers. A naturally occurring counter to my big assumption that I would now like to deliberately plan to do is lead by example. One test design idea from the brainstormed list that seems likely to meet these criteria is if the school culture (staff and student morale) and the interim benchmark assessment data increases, then student achievement will increase.

Week Six: Running and Interpreting Your First Test

In Week 6, I ran the safe test of my big assumption that I designed the previous week and then interpreted the data that I collected. This afforded the world the opportunity to show me that my big assumption, which might have made sense at an earlier time in my life, was due for some changes for the present and future. Firstly, I had to take action and record the results of the action while maintaining a focus on what I actually did and what happened. Both were recorded in detail and provided a myriad of information for use in my test interpretation. After designing my test, I applied the S-M-A-R-T backwards, T-R-A-M-S.

Starting with T and R ensured that the test actually tested the big assumption and was able to lead to data that assisted in determining the validity of the big assumption. Also, if there was a poor quality T and R, it didn't matter how safe, modest or actionable it was. It was easier to figure out a small action that I could take within the next day or so (safe, modest and actionable), but it did not necessarily lead to learning anything about my big assumption. Creating a test that does a good job with T and R was the hardest part of figuring out a good test, so was important to determine the weakest link.

When I planned my test, I had to think first about what could happen that could disprove my big assumption. It was important to note that if I could not imagine what data could test my assumption, then I did not have a testable assumption. I also noticed whether the bad thing that I thought would happen actually happened. While running my test, I took notes to keep track of the data and recorded what I would do differently and what happened as a result. A description of what I did during the my test and the data collected were included below:

“D”: Did, Do, Data

I spoke to my Principal and shared my big assumption that if I let the teachers fail to rise to their readiness level, then I will inevitably fail as a transformative school leader, which would negatively impact students. The Principal said that she was confident that the teachers will rise to their readiness level because of my leadership style and that student achievement would increase.

“I”: Interpretation

I considered her interpretation to mean that she was confident in my leadership abilities to build teacher capacity. I felt validated and I informed the Principal that I was running a test at the end of our conversation. I asked her to tell me how she felt and she said that she was happy that I was doing the Harvard course to increase my knowledge of how my individual beliefs combined with the collective mind-sets in the district create a dynamic (immunity to change) and it would be impactful to the school.

“C”: Connection

My test resonated with my big assumption. In this case, I assume that if I let the teachers not rise to their readiness level, then, I will inevitably fail as a transformative school leader and the students would be at a disadvantage. I am finally seeing that I have to be confident in my ability

to increase the instructional core by ensuring that teachers are ready and provided with the professional development to increase the rigor of the curriculum to increase student achievement.

“E”: Encore

I felt positive about my first test.

My test was successful because I collected valid data that supported the accuracy of my big assumption. I then reviewed the actual behaviors that I engaged in to determine if I unintentionally acted in ways that could prove my big assumption to be true. I also analyzed the data that I gathered to see if it is high quality and specifically if it was directly observable data or did I move to interpreting it automatically.

Week Seven: Designing Your Second Test

In Week 7, I designed my second test of my big assumption. The importance of running multiple tests helped develop greater reliability of my big assumption and avoid any claims of inconclusive results. Some exemplary examples of data from running the test of my big assumption are what I say or do that went against what my big assumption directs me to do, how I feel when I did the opposite of what my big assumption directed me to do (or the opposite of one of my column 2 behaviors), what other people said or did when I enact my test, how I felt about what other people said or do when I enacted my test and other people’s non-verbal behaviors when I ran my test.

I had to first figure out what data would lead me to question my big assumption and to then work backwards and think about what safe and modest action I could take to generate that data. I followed that suggestion because if there was no data from the test that could lead me to doubt my big assumption, then this was not a good test. I realized that if I discovered what that

data was, then I would have an easier time figuring out how to create the best case situation to generate it. I also discovered what that data was, and thus satisfied the R and T parts of the S-M-A-R-T criteria, which were often the hardest of the criteria for designing a quality test.

Running a second test was important because a big assumption can rarely be overturned by running a single test. With multiple tests, I can often gain greater “distance” or “separation” between myself and my big assumption. It was essential to test the big assumption in multiple contexts to see when it was and was not accurate. A new or revised big assumption may have come up after running the first test, and it was important to test that too. I may feel like I was already free of my big assumption, but without repeated tests, it might be temporarily lying inactive.

When designing my second test of my big assumption and brainstorming test ideas, it became apparent that testing the big assumption was an iterative process. Since it was rare that any big assumption can be adequately explored, confirmed, revised or overturned after running just one test, it was important to run at least three tests. The first rationale came from a safety perspective when taking intentional yet microscopic steps to gain confidence in what was being learned about my big assumption. I realized that by gaining disconfirming data with just one test, it alludes to the fact that the results were unsubstantiated.

What I learned in my first test helped me figure out how to design my second test such as running the same test in a different context, making a modification that is less safe or testing a different part of my big assumption. The big assumption that I was testing was that if I let the teachers fail to rise to their readiness level, then I will inevitably fail as a transformative school leader, which would negatively impact students and decrease their academic achievement in

standardized tests. The purpose of the test was to determine what happens when I purposely change my typical behavior in order to decipher the accuracy of my big assumption.

The idea for my next test of my big assumption is the impact on student achievement on standardized test scores. The purpose is to increase the risk by changing more of my behavior in ways that gravitate me towards my goal while ensuring safety and modesty to learn about the accuracy of my big assumption. My new test design was if I am more confident in my ability to increase the instructional core by ensuring that teachers are ready and provided with the professional development to increase the rigor of the curriculum to increase student achievement, then the teachers will impact students to increase their proficiency in standardized test scores.

My test design included a plan for how I changed my behavior in some way. The component that I did differently is that I monitored the implementation of the professional development and evaluated the effectiveness of the professional development on teacher pedagogy and measured the impact on student achievement. The data that I collected were student increases on standardized tests and teacher surveys on the impact of professional development on their pedagogy. An observer that I asked to give me targeted feedback was one of my peers who was an Assistant Principal. The data I collected informed my big assumption to determine if I wanted to see if my big assumption was effective and if not, how might I have made it effective.

Week Eight: Running and Interpreting Your Second Test

In Week 8, I was able to run and analyze my second test to link to my big assumption. The evidence substantiated the accuracy of my big assumption, which gave me crucial

information regarding when and where my big assumption was accurate. I ran my second test and tracked data and recorded what I did differently in my test and the outcome.

“D”: Did, Do, Data

I spoke to my Principal and shared my big assumption that if I let the teachers fail to rise to their readiness level, then I will inevitably fail as a transformative school leaders, which would negatively impact students. She said that she was confident that the teachers will rise to their readiness level because of my leadership style and that student achievement would increase. The adjustment that I made was if I am more confident in my ability to increase the instructional core by ensuring that teachers are ready and provided with the professional development to increase the rigor of the curriculum to increase student achievement, then the teachers will impact students to increase their proficiency in standardized test scores. I then asked my peer (another Assistant Principal) for feedback.

“I”: Interpretation

I considered her interpretation to mean that she was confident in my leadership abilities to build teacher capacity. I felt validated and I informed her that I was running a test at the end of our conversation. I asked her to tell me how she felt and she said that she was happy that I was doing the course to increase my knowledge of how my individual beliefs combined with the collective mind-sets in the district create a dynamic (immunity to change) and it would be impactful to the school. My peer said that my plan was working since the teachers said that they feel more confident and equipped through our school site and district based professional development to increase student achievement. The interim benchmark assessments that were

administered to students show a 17% increase in student achievement as compared to the prior year standards' assessments.

“C”: Connection

My test resonated with my big assumption. In this case I assumed that if I let the teachers not rise to their readiness level, then, I will inevitably fail as a transformative school leaders and the students would be at a disadvantage. I am finally seeing that I have to be confident in my ability to increase the instructional core by ensuring that teachers are ready and provided with the professional development to increase the rigor of the curriculum to increase student achievement.

“E”: Encore

I felt positive about my first test. My second test was much more data driven and increased the validity and reliability of my trial. It was important to generate more than one interpretation of my data. I was able to determine other assumptions that I had been holding that relate to my immunity and have been interfering with progress. I accumulated ideas for another test. I analyzed specific information and insights pertaining to what progress looked like and what needed to happen to make progress and add those to my Continuum of Progress. I enacted the new behavior and gained high quality data.

My data interpretation reinforces that by enhancing the instructional core through ensuring that teachers are ready and provided with the professional development to increase the rigor of the curriculum to increase student achievement, the teachers have impacted students to increase their proficiency in standardized test scores. It is the most plausible and my primary learning from the test tells me important details regarding my big assumption. I felt good about what I learned from my test. A reflection about what I had learned about my big assumption, now

that I had the opportunity to review all the self-assessment feedback tips was that I have impacted the instructional core by ensuring that teachers are ready and provided with the professional development to increase the rigor of the curriculum to increase student achievement. My tests have added to the reliability of my assumptions.

Week Nine: Designing, Running and Interpreting Your Third Test

In Week 9, I had the opportunity to design, run, and interpret a third test of my big assumption. A planned test was appropriate for my third test since I maintained my exact big assumption. This allowed me to gain greater confidence in what I was learning about my big assumption. Several tests allowed me to understand the accuracy of my big assumption in multiple contexts. My big assumption can rarely be overturned by running a single test. With multiple tests, I can often gain greater “distance” or “separation” between myself and my big assumption.

It was crucial to test the big assumption in multiple contexts to see when it is and is not accurate. A revised big assumption that may have come up after running the first test would be important to test as well. I thought that I was already free of my big assumption, but without repeated tests, it may just be temporarily lying inactive. When deciding whether or not to have someone to assist in the data collection process on the test that I will run at the next meeting, I believe that the most appropriate choice to ask was someone that I trusted to tell me the truth. In giving myself the best opportunity of discovering data that questioned my big assumption, the steps that were useful included thinking about how I would respond to any negative thoughts or voices that I heard inside your head and imagining different scenarios for how my test will go and consider how I might want to respond.

I also had to consider the implications of tone of voice, body language, and choice of words in addition to anticipating how my typical ways of verbally expressing myself might lead to confirming my big assumption. When I do something new or an activity that I am nervous about doing, I have a tendency to be self-critical. It can be helpful to practice techniques for reducing negative mind chatter. It can also be advantageous to plan ahead for obstacles and opportunities that can be encountered during the running of the test, as well as to enhance the skills and strategies necessary for a successful test.

“D”: Did, Do, Data

I spoke to my Principal and shared my big assumption that if I let the teachers fail to rise to their readiness level, then I will inevitably fail as a transformative school leaders, which would negatively impact students. She said that she was confident that the teachers will rise to their readiness level because of my leadership style and that student achievement would increase. The adjustment that I made was if I am more confident in my ability to increase the instructional core by ensuring that teachers are ready and provided with the professional development to increase the rigor of the curriculum to increase student achievement, then the teachers will impact students to increase their proficiency in standardized test scores. I then asked my peer (another Assistant Principal) for feedback.

“I”: Interpretation

I considered her interpretation to mean that she was confident in my leadership abilities to build teacher capacity. I felt validated and I informed her that I was running a test at the end of our conversation. I asked her to tell me how she felt and she said that she was happy that I was doing the course to increase my knowledge of how my individual beliefs combined with

the collective mind-sets in the district create a dynamic (immunity to change) and it would be impactful to the school. My peer said that my plan was working since the teachers said that they feel more confident and equipped through our school site and district based professional development to increase student achievement. The interim benchmark assessments that were administered to students show a 17% increase in student achievement as compared to the prior year standards' assessments.

“C”: Connection

My test resonated with my big assumption. In this case I assumed that if I let the teachers not rise to their readiness level, then, I will inevitably fail as a transformative school leaders and the students would be at a disadvantage. I am finally seeing that I have to be confident in my ability to increase the instructional core by ensuring that teachers are ready and provided with the professional development to increase the rigor of the curriculum to increase student achievement.

“E”: Encore

I felt positive about my first test. My second test was much more data driven and increased the validity and reliability of my trial. After running my third test, I observed and reflected on the relationship between the progress that I have made away from my big assumption, and the progress that I made toward my improvement goal. I have observed tremendous progress towards achieving my improvement goal. In the video, there was distance from my big assumption. I felt like I made progress toward my improvement goal and was able to make a deeper internal connection to hold myself more accountable.

Week Ten: Hooks and Releases

In Week 10, I explored the final week of the IOCE program. I reviewed the Change Diary which encompassed the Continuum of Progress and rate myself on how to peel the layers of my motives with prescriptive feedback that reveal the self-sabotaging tendencies that hinder my personal changes, and will enable me to grow into an effective transformative educational leadership researcher and impact meaningful change. I created a new Immunity to Change (ITC) map to continue lifelong engagement with transformative leadership. The videos offered insight on how to infuse the ITC progress into my daily life.

In taking a penultimate look at my Continuum of Progress, the initial steps forward were that my life would be more target-driven since the school culture would be improved and the teachers would be attending targeted professional development opportunities to develop core pedagogy and content strategies to increase student proficiency. The significant progress section stated that the quantitative score on the School Effectiveness Questionnaire (SEQ) will be improved by at least five percentage points from the prior year (which is statistically significant). Overall student scores on the standardized assessments will be at 85% or higher.

The full success was that I was at a low-performing school last year where the majority of students were not at the proficiency level or above on state assessments. I wish that I could wave a magic wand and get all students to proficiency. My vision of success would be getting the teachers prepared to teach at a high level of rigor to impact student achievement. I would assess myself at the full success level. I have fully succeeded in achieving my improvement goal. I feel liberated and motivated regarding my progress thus far. I see a greater fulfillment in my personal life as a result of my professional success as a result of having modified my big assumptions.

I took the IOCE as an individual and I have since been promoted to a Supervising Administrator in the School District of Palm Beach County. I have also been interviewed for a Director position in Professional Development, and also a Consultant position with the teacher evaluation system. I attribute these recent successes to the insight provided in this course. My passion is providing equitable and social justice opportunities to students. I have experienced success in closing the achievement gaps of multicultural students at the teacher, school administrative, district administrative and college levels. My humble beginning as a Trinidadian immigrant with core values of trustworthiness, determination and competency are a testament that the American dream is possible.

Week Eleven: Ending Well

In Week 11, I have already begun to make good progress towards my improvement goal. After reflecting from the Hooks and Releases process, I have attained several ways to make sure that I do not lose the ground that I have gained, so that the old habits that once prevented me from change are no longer “hooking” me. My big assumption has been diminished and I have distinctly distanced myself from it. One of the best outcomes possible was attained. I have new assumptions that actually assists in achieving my goal has replaced you big assumption. Although is is not a required element for *Ending Well*, I have been empowered to maximize my Continuum of Progress by incorporating those new assumptions into my vision of success.

Over the course of my Immunity-to-Change work for future progress, I have written about various assumptions pertaining to my initial big assumption. I have assumed that if I let the teachers not rise to their readiness level, then I will inevitably fail as a transformative school leader and the students would be at a disadvantage. Also, I assumed that teacher preparedness

directly affects student achievement. I intend to continue creating tests for those related assumptions, creating a new improvement goal, new doing/not doing instead, new worry box, new hidden commitments and new big assumptions. I am excited for the lifelong process of transformative growth.

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