




# School @ the Centre of Community

## Key assumptions:




- Education is one of the 2 critical challenges facing our country (refer National Planning Commission – June 2011);
- School Leadership is at the heart of the issue (refer National Planning Commission – June 2011);
- Despite huge investment in education during the last decades, we are not seeing the change we need to see;
- There are thousands of initiatives in education but these initiatives are not aligned and coherent;
- We have the knowledge and skills in South Africa to deal with the education crisis but no sector can do this on their own – we need to tap into the skills & capabilities of all citizens across the country;
- **Education has to be a national priority for all of us!**

## Our theory of change




A proposition to address the Education Challenge facing South Africa

Summary	Further explanation
<p>1. The unit of change is the School...</p> 	<p><b>The Unit of change is the School</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are +/- 25,000 underperforming schools in South Africa – this can easily feel overwhelming (the size of the task is so big);</li> <li>• We will change Education <b>one school at a time</b></li> </ul>







Summary	Further explanation
<p>2.</p> <p>The principal is the change leader at each school ...</p> 	<p><b>The Principal is the change leader at each school</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The person who <b>should</b> and <b>must</b> lead change at the school is the principal;</li> <li>• Most of our principals are de-energized, disillusioned, over-burdened and have lost their drive and passion;</li> <li>• In order for them to lead change, they will need to rediscover their capacity to lead change in their schools &amp; their communities.</li> </ul>
<p>3.</p> <p>The Principal needs to be supported &amp; equipped for this task....</p> 	<p><b>The Principal needs to be supported and equipped for this task</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Principals are expected to lead major turnarounds at their schools;</li> <li>• This requires them to think strategically about the school and then implement change;</li> <li>• Very few of our principals have been equipped to lead a major social change process;</li> <li>• They are incredibly busy just dealing with the day-to-day tactical demands at the school;</li> <li>• We have learned from experience in organisational change that <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is not sufficient to put people who need to lead change through training programmes;</li> <li>• Change leaders need to be supported with extra resource &amp; capacity;</li> <li>• In business we support change leaders with coaches, consultants, change teams etc;</li> <li>• The least we can do is to provide each principal with a change partner (someone who can support and assist them with the change).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>4.</p> <p>The best people to support our principals are people who have knowledge &amp; experience of leading organisational change...</p> 	<p><b>The best people to support our principals are people who have knowledge and experience of leading organisational change</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have thousands of business leaders in South Africa who have been trained &amp; equipped to lead change;</li> <li>• Experience shows that if we equip them for working with principals in schools (this is <b>critical</b>), then they are able to successfully support the principal;</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We currently have 13 business leaders working with principals as Partners for Possibility. The results are astonishing; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By the end of 2011 we will have 33 business leaders doing so;</li> <li>• Our vision is to recruit at least a hundred more business leaders in 2012 and then have thousands of leaders working with principals in 2013 and beyond.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



Summary	Further explanation
<p>5. The principal needs an actively engaged team around him/her to make change happen...</p> 	<p><b>The Principal needs an actively engaged team around him/her to make change happen</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At most of our schools, the only people actively involved at the school are the staff;</li> <li>• These staff members (especially the teachers) are de-energized and disengaged;</li> <li>• Principals have typically not been equipped to engage the disengaged (but business leaders have)</li> </ul>
<p>6. The staff at the school need parents and other members of the community around the school to get involved – they can't lead change on their own...</p> 	<p><b>The staff at the school need parents and other members of the community around the school to get involved – they can't lead change on their own</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>It takes a village to raise a child;</b></li> <li>• Most of our parents have abdicated responsibility for raising <b>our</b> children to the school;</li> <li>• Our children are awake 5,800 hours a year. Of that time they spend +/- 1,200 hours (20%) at the school and the rest in the community;</li> <li>• We (citizens) have to reclaim responsibility for what happens in the 80% as this has a crucial impact on what happens during the 20%;</li> <li>• Parents are the primary educators;</li> <li>• Most parents want to support their children but they are simply not equipped to do so.</li> <li>• We have seen a lot of success in engaging parents at schools through a combination of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Active enrolment and <b>a new 'contract'</b> between the school and the parents;</li> <li>• <b>Community building</b> sessions and other events where the school is truly becoming the hub of the community;</li> <li>• Implementation of an <b>SMS</b> system to communicate with parents;</li> <li>• Implementation of <b>homework diaries</b> to facilitate conversation between parents and teachers;</li> <li>• Use of the <b>Smart-Kids books</b> to enable parents to get actively involved with homework</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>7. The school can be a magnet for gifts and contribution from the community...</p> 	<p><b>The school can be a magnet for gifts &amp; contribution from the community</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most citizens in South Africa want to make a contribution to education but they have not known how to do so;</li> <li>• When principals are open to contribution, active citizens are keen to bring their gifts and contributions to the schools.</li> </ul>



Summary	Further explanation
<p>8.</p> 	<p><b>All those involved with the school need to be aligned behind a shared vision for the school</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Principals have been told for years to develop a vision for their schools and then to have a plan to achieve this vision. However, very few of them have been successful in achieving these visions;</li> <li>• Most principals simply don't know how to mobilise their communities to craft a vision that they can all support and then to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agree on the key objectives &amp; priorities for the school;</li> <li>• Develop an action plan (with roles &amp; responsibilities) for each objective;</li> <li>• Ensure that all parties work to these objectives &amp; priorities (including all the NGOs and other partners working at the school)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• We need to enlist the support and contribution of all of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers, Parents &amp; Learners;</li> <li>• Government officials who have a responsibility for the school (Education dept, Social services, South African Police, Dept of public works);</li> <li>• NGOs working at the school;</li> <li>• Donors to the school;</li> <li>• Staff from the local clinic, hospital &amp; library;</li> <li>• Religious leaders;</li> <li>• Business leaders from businesses around the school;</li> <li>• Neighbours of the school.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Each of the above groups has responsibility to contribute to an environment where our children can flourish.</p>
<p>9. Accountability &amp; Follow-through</p> 	<p><b>Accountability &amp; Follow-through</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All those in the school need to be disciplined enough to meet twice a year to account (to each other) what has happened: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How they have followed through on their commitments;</li> <li>• How this has impacted on educational outcomes at the school.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>10. we can't expect a quick fix  we need to invest "3-5 yrs" per school...</p> 	<p><b>We can't expect a quick fix – we need to invest 3-5 years per school</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have seen amazing change after 12 months in some of the schools but to get a school to be a preferred school in their local community will take much longer</li> </ul>

