An Investigation of School-based Management

Introduction:

In order to have a deeper understanding of school governance and management, we interviewed different stakeholders in school and asked for their observations, opinions and experiences in different perspectives of school governance and management.

In this poster, we try to analyze and show how teachers are actually participating and what challenges they are facing.

School Background:

1. English Medium Secondary School
2. 校政管理委員會(1997)→ IMC(For five years)
3. 40AP:Nomination of alumni manager
(6) A person nominated under subsection (4) or (5) :
(a) must be an alumni of the school; and
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Methods:

We interviewed three stakeholders in one secondary school. They are teacher A, teacher B and Student. We provided two sets of questions. Set A included 18 questions with three parts (1. background information 2. school organization, leadership and autonomy 3. expectations and supports for students). Set A was for the two teachers. Set B included 14 questions with three parts which was known by students (1. background Information 2. school autonomy 3.school performance). Finally, we compared different perspectives from stakeholders to understand the conditions and problems of this school.

Conceptual arguments insist that teachers need to engage in complex thinking to be effective in their jobs, unlike teacher technicians who are expected to adhere to a set of directives. (Webb, 2002)

A. School Autonomy

1. Functional Autonomy in Areas

➢ **Enhanced Autonomy for Principals & Teachers**
● **Analysis:**
· Principal has higher autonomy in staffing and budgeting than vice-principals and teachers but sometimes, about the budget, he is limited by the IMC. He also have the autonomy in deciding whether the school need to follow the request by the government. He always keep the authority of final decision-making.
· Vice-principals have high autonomy in managing their subordinate, select high and middle level managers in their own domain.
· Middle managers in groups have high autonomy in choosing group members, arranging duties and jobs to the group members and staff deployment in their group.
· Middle managers also have autonomy in budgeting in a specific area but at the same time are limited by Principal and SSB.
· Teachers have great autonomy in designing curriculum and assessment. However, this causes different circumstances in different groups.
● **Problem:**
· Students from different classes are learning different things because of teacher's high autonomy in designing curriculum and assessment. It leads to difficulty in evaluating student performance of the students who are from the same level.
· Moreover, this brings difficulties to students' learning and revision and therefore affects students' performance in examination certainly.

2. Structural Autonomy in levels

➢ **Varied Changes at Individual, Group and Organizational Levels**
● **Analysis:**
· Some teachers cannot participate in IMC because of their conflicting identities.
· The school have high autonomy when hiring new manager, the independent manager, under the requirement of IMC members.
· No matter in which condition, SSB has the highest autonomy than other manager, principal and teachers.
· Principal and senior leaders have autonomy to form school council.

3. Cultural Autonomy in Practices

➢ **Multi-level Self Learning**
● **Analysis:**
· As a professional, teachers should improve themselves in different aspects. Not only improves the knowledge as a follower, but also as a leader.
· School welcomed teachers to take some courses with their personal decision.
· Principal and vice principal acted the models to have an improvement on their new identities→ built up a culture autonomy for teachers to reflect themselves and keep on studying on different levels.
● **Problem:**
· The workload of teachers are too heavy.

➢ **Collaboration & Partnership**
➢ **School-based adaptability & flexibility**
● **Analysis:**
· Easy to have collaborations → reflected the high autonomy and flexibility of different departments.
· Collaboration between different departments were happened by task based.
· Teachers in this school should have high autonomy, adaptability and flexibility to deal with different conditions and problems.
● **Problem:**
· School has a high autonomy on collaboration because of the task based actions. However, school did not know that how to prevent the problems.
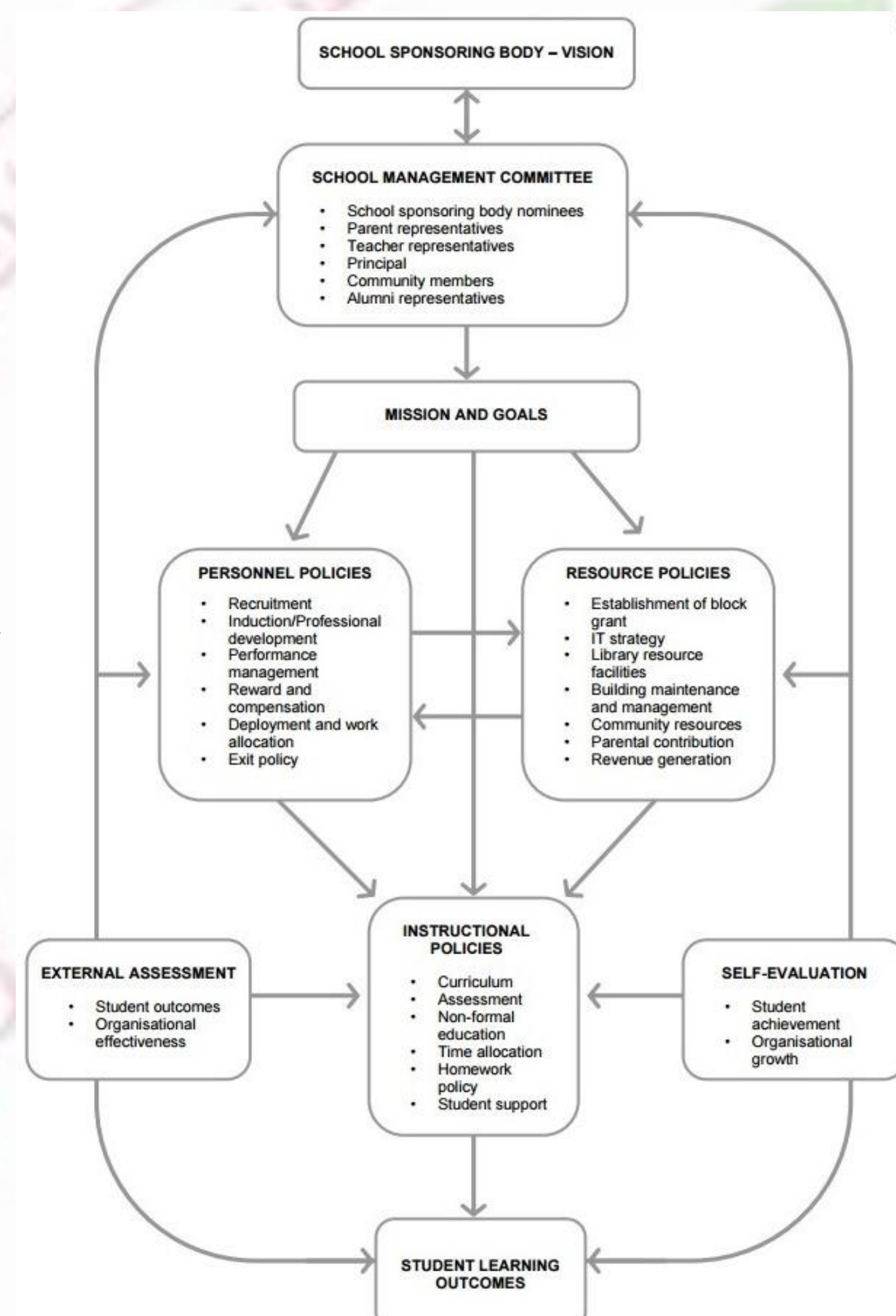

Figure 1: Factors Affecting Teaching and Learning

Establishing good collaborations with different communities helps improve students' achievement in different areas. Enhancing the collaboration with local primary schools helps the secondary school get more enrollment of good students and ensures the smooth transfer of students between primary and secondary schools. (Connolly, 2006)

"Teachers who view themselves as leaders can improvise teaching-learning practices, manage their classrooms effectively," (Nudrat, p105)
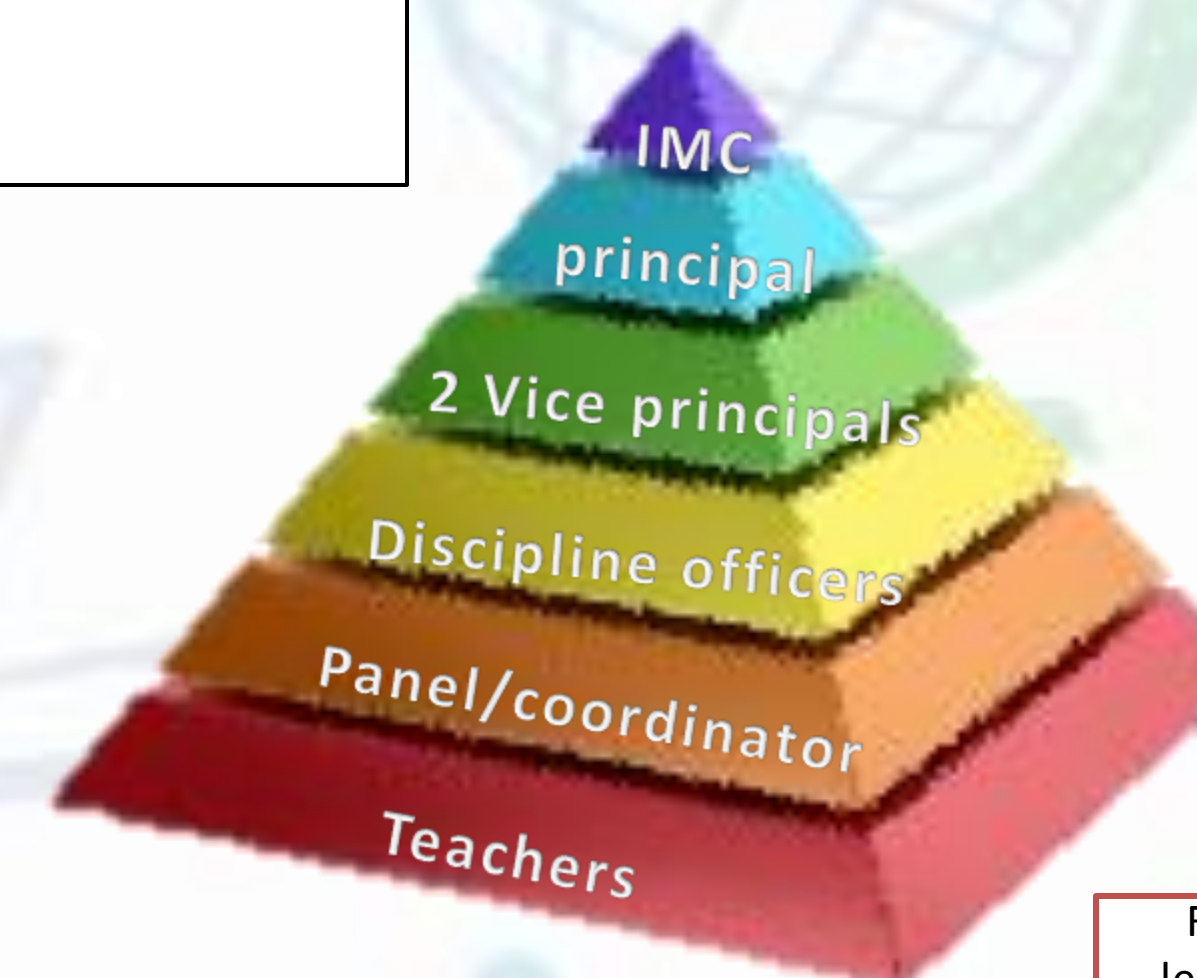
B. Leadership

➢ **Leadership for functional initiatives**
● **Analysis**
In terms of leadership, basically we found three main areas.
Leadership for functional initiatives, it is shown that thy have great leadership in curriculum and teaching method.
● **Problem**
The leadership is a little bit restricted in curriculum design but lack cultural leadership.

➢ **Leadership for structural initiatives**
● **Analysis**
As for B2, Leadership for structural initiatives, Structural initiatives includes multi-level leadership and distributed leadership. The picture shows their power distribution structure.
In the transcription of the interview we can see so they have the leadership for structural initiatives. Different principles have different responsibilities.
● **Problem**
Three coordinators may take over a big part of the teachers. The distribution of their power and responsibilities can be more detailed. Besides, the top-down structure make teachers harder to find mistakes of higher levels.

C. School Performance

1. Enhanced functional/educational conditions

➢ **New school-community model with local primary schools**
➢ **Collaboration with business**
● **Analysis:**
· Build up collaboration with social organizations and make use of these resources to hold different activities to enrich the students' extra-school learning experience and broaden the students' vision.
● **Problem:**
· The collaboration with school communities or social communities is not sufficient.

2. Enhanced pedagogical performances

➢ **Strong experiential learning**
● **Analysis:**
· Enhance the pedagogical performances by developing various subject-related activities.
· Show the strong experiential learning approach.
· Provide the students with opportunities to practice different skills from the real experiences → contribute not only to the achievement in learning but also to other different skills like self-management and social interpersonal skills

3. Enhanced & broadened students' learning

➢ **Student leadership programs**
➢ **Multilevel goal orientation development**
● **Analysis:**
· The students' abilities to organize and lead activities are improved
· Offer different tutorial groups to cater for students' different needs
· Multilevel orientations which benefits to students' personal development like social work and team activities
● **Problem:**
· The senior grade students have less extra school activities because of the examination stress.

Figure 2: The structure of leading power in this school

Conclusion:

After interviews of different stakeholders, we find out that the school has high autonomy and distributed leadership. Various activities also help improve the students' performance. However, high autonomy and multiple activities leads to difficulties for students to learn different things. What's more, the collaboration with the community is not sufficient. Besides, the school has less extra school activities for senior grade students due to examination pressure.

References:
Advisory Committee on School-based Management. (2000). *Transforming schools into dynamic and accountable professional learning communities: School-based management consultation document.* Hong Kong: Hong Kong Government Printer.
Connolly, M., & James, C. (2006). Collaboration for School Improvement A Resource Dependency and Institutional Framework of Analysis. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, *34*(1), 69-87.
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A. School Autonomy

1. Functional Autonomy in Areas

Enchanced Autonomy for Principals & Teachers

Different perspectives:

① Student: 學生一直沒有自己的locker，學生會由我入學時已經開始爭取，都不成功，但新校長就能夠跟校董會協商好，在這方面花錢。新校長加入，學校在財政運用的自主性方面，感覺大大提升了。

② Teacher B: 第二任校長掌握學校的程度高很多，有些事不用做得那麼足......新校長對我們的認識不多，他不知道我們是如何運作，所以他會把所有事做足，假如EDB有十項request，他一定會做完十個。但因校長可能覺得十項request中，7,8,9,10項在我們學校中是屬於NA的，他就不會處理了，他做1-6。

③ Teacher B: 我們學校有兩位副校長，其中一位是負責教與學、評核和管核的職員，例如是為基麼教師上班經常遲到這方面。另外一位副校長是負責學生事務......兩位副校長每人分了一系列的事務，而這一系列的事務又會各有一個「話事人」去帶領那一組。

④ Teacher B: 這間學校的人力資源的調配是flexible的。例如我每年想要哪位同事，不想哪位同事，我都可以提出......其他如果主任得是按科組的需要去做，最後其實是「應用則用」就可以，我們IMC的成員員的投放許多心力在學校，他們真的看完整年的year plan和budget，他們也會提出budget。

⑤ Teacher B: 課程設計和評估的自主程度大到沒譜。說得好聽的是自治，不好聽的就是「無王管」。這方面的空間是非常大的，每班教的業西也可能有很大出入。我們在偏時間我都安排了一至中六每一級中的、中、數、過多科共同備課。我知道有同事未有善用這些時間，我們鼓勵他們做這件事，他給予他們空間，但我們難以逼他們去做。

Teacher A: 我們的老師都很好，例如上學期有單元一至單元四，我們有四名老師教，每個老師就負責兩個單元，處理讀寫聽說教材，放上內聯網，互相分享，老師們視乎是否適合自己使用，可以直接使用或加減內容，故老師能在一個框架下，具自主性地備課。

2. Structural Autonomy in levels

➤ Varied Changes at Individual, Group and Organizational Levels

Different perspectives:

① Teacher B: 直至法團校董會成立之後，由於身份的問題，我是在這裏教書，法律上不容許我以舊生的身份加入，所以我就quit了。

② Teacher B:我們IMC這個行為，好像招聘般的在那些權似教師求職版那裏登廣告，很奇怪地，真的有人來求職......我們現在的獨立校董是離開退休的，而且是城大studenet或者director，是一位很資深的教育界人士......現在就算要會董聘請他，也因為校董會覺得這個人是合他們的意才請，沒理由由一個與自己作對的人......

③ Teacher B: 辦學團體在IMC中佔人數過半，所以辦學團體想做些基麼，他們依然是能「話事」的。只不過看是絕大多數通過，還是大多數通過而已。我覺得議案其實很難被影響，他們始終是辦學團體，想怎樣就怎樣。

④ Teacher B: 在新校長來時，我們成立了一個school council，是由好幾位一些較資深的同事組成......因為新校長不清楚這間學校，他需要有一班人幫助他。其實school council是一個諮詢的架構，讓它發揮功能，但因老師事務現不好，他想知道這位同事過往的表現，亦曾上課的表現、如何對待學生等等，那麼school council一事就能幫上它。

3. Cultural Autonomy in Practices

➤ Multi-level Self Learning

Different perspectives:

① Teacher A: 譬如新進那位副校，她也要take course，讀完就要實踐，如學校的三年計劃中，如果是把這寫篇理論，可以看到是把理論的步驟去實踐......

② Teacher B: 我以上的領導層是校長和副校長，他們全部都喜歡讀書的，他們要讀一些principalship的course，at least 要讀一個......我現時在正修讀中文的一科「學校改善與領導」，因為我去中這訓導主任後，我覺得做member和做leader有很大差異......我覺得自己身為一個leader，但我不懂如何帶領一群人，我希望這群人跟著我一起工作是有意義的，而非四處碰板......

③ Student: 有，兩任校長的作風很不同......說真的，我更喜歡新校長的管理模式，我認為更與時並進，更切合學生需要。

➤ Collaboration & Partnership

➤ School-based adaptability & flexibility

Different perspectives:

① Teacher A: 譬如我們中文科都會和視覺藝術科合作，因為視藝科是一個老師教全部的課，所以他的自主性就更加大......他就會問我們不同的coordinator，比如他會問，我這個單元正在教描寫風景，所以我就想一下跨學科合作上是很容易的......

② Teacher B: 正因為這麼flexible，所以有很多合作。因為事情很瑣碎，大家都各自工作，有時候很需要協調......我們不會有一個組織定期要某些組別協作，但當有事故生時，不同組別就會協作。學科組也是這樣的，如英文科和career協作，因為生物jupas要求500字英文短文，由英文科老師協助下令會比career老師改更好......

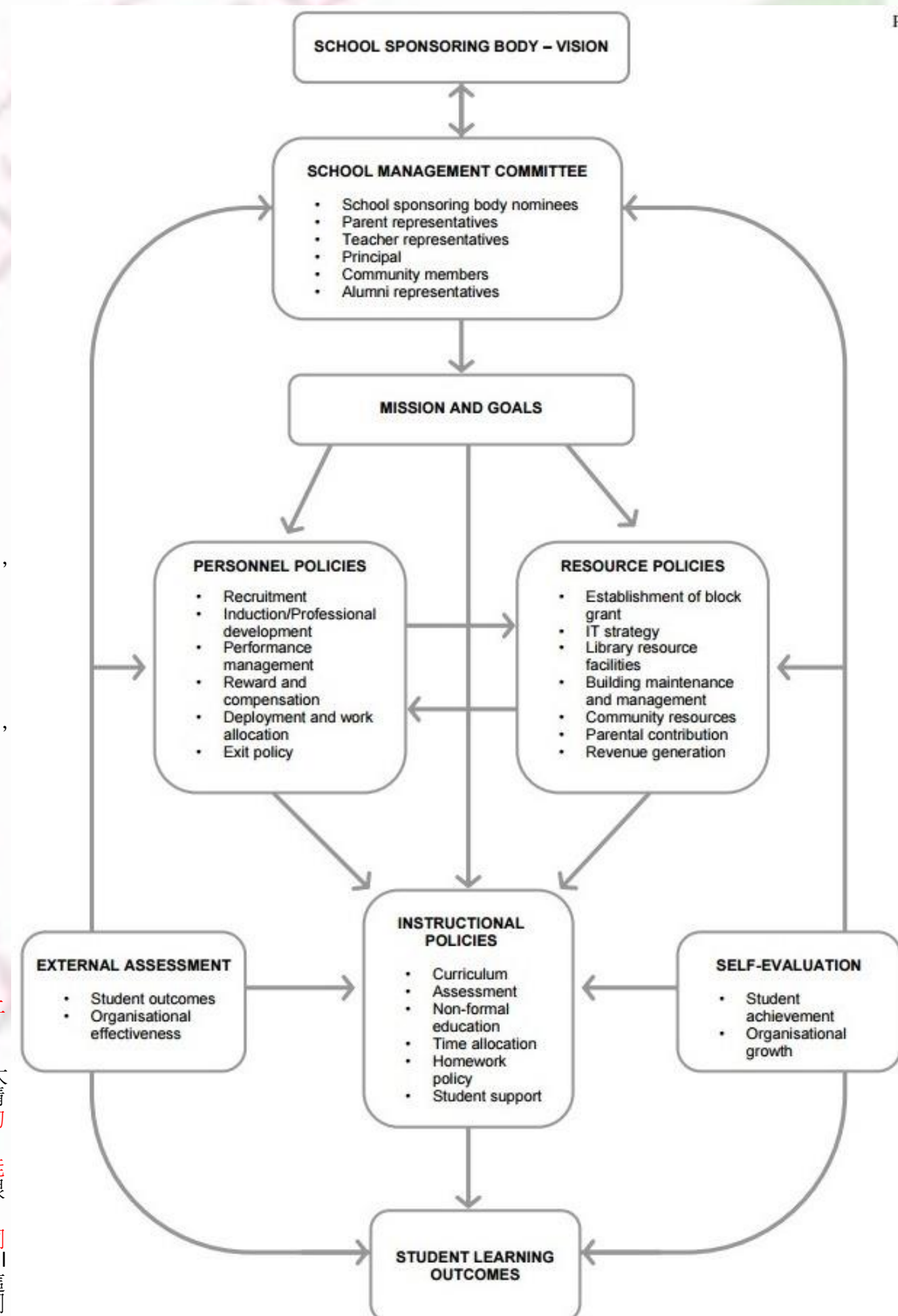③ Student: 就個人觀察所得，雖然我有很多合作性的活動，但只有少數會固定合作。學校的跨學科活動其實都很「即興」，認為可以做得到，就會嘗試......

SCHOOL SPONSORING BODY – VISION

SCHOOL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
- School sponsoring body nominees
- Parent representatives
- Teacher representatives
- Principal
- Community members
- Alumni representatives

MISSION AND GOALS

PERSONNEL POLICIES
- Recruitment
- Induction/Professional development
- Performance management
- Reward and compensation
- Deployment and work allocation
- Exit policy

RESOURCE POLICIES
- Establishment of block grant
- IT strategy
- Library resource facilities
- Building maintenance and management
- Community resources
- Parental contribution
- Revenue generation

INSTRUCTIONAL POLICIES
- Curriculum
- Assessment
- Non-formal education
- Time allocation
- Homework policy
- Student support

EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT
- Student outcomes
- Organisational effectiveness

SELF-EVALUATION
- Student achievement
- Organisational growth

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Figure 1: Factors Affecting Teaching and Learning

Establishing good collaborations with different communities helps improve students' achievement in different areas. Enhancing the collaboration with local primary schools helps the secondary school get more enrollment of good students and ensures the smooth transfer of students between primary and secondary schools. (Connolly, 2006)

"Teachers who view themselves as leaders can improvise teaching-learning practices, manage their classrooms effectively," (Nudrat, p105)

B. Leadership

1. Leadership for functional initiatives

Curriculum leadership

Teacher A: 「譬如我們中文科都會和視覺藝術科合作，因為視藝科是一個老師教全部的課，所以他的自主性就更加大。因為每一級教中文的都會有一個coordinator，他會問我們不同的coordinator，比如他會問，我這個單元正在教描寫風景。我們一組有三個「阿頭」，每個「阿頭」都會跟校長陳述我們的理念，而校長都很願意配合我們。」

2. Leadership for cultural initiatives

Distributed leadership

① **Teacher B:** 我們學校有兩位副校長，其中一位是負責教與學、評核和管核教職員，例如是為基麼教師上班經常遲到這方面。另外一位副校長是負責學生事務，剛才說的訓導組也是under這位的。Base on這兩位副校長，下面設了許多不同的subgroups，你從這個organization chart就可看到是這樣的。壞處是討論空間相對較小，如有些較基層的同事會覺得自己很想做某些事，但他們會考慮上層會否批准，因為整體是由上而下的，在這方面我認為是比較弱的。

C. School Performance

1. Enhanced functional/educational conditions

➤ New school-community model with local primary schools

① Student: 「小學合作的話......具體內容並非部學生或教師支援小學，而是邀請小學的教師到中學參觀......或許這亦是小學與中學在升學方面的合作策略......」

➤ Collaboration with business

① Student: 「當時會邀請香港一些有名的作家如可洛及余非等來學校，教我們創作......」；「我亦參加了與荃灣及葵青區幼稚園合辦的義工活動，暑假期間，每個星期六到幼稚園教導一班狀升讀小一的學生閱讀英文故事書。」

2. Enhanced pedagogical performances

➤ Strong experiential learning

Different perspectives:

① Teacher A: 「如果語文能力的話，其實會有聯校活動，聯校口試提升語文能力，是中文科的......我想這就是訓練了語文。」；「因為我們平時在課室中都是與同校同學進行說話，但是出去和不同學校就知道自己的水準在基麼位置，而且有不同的老師評分而不是自己本身的學校，都可能提供另外一些角度給他們思考自己可能有這方面可以繼續改善或者加強自己有這些的優點出不一定。」；「......主要只要覺得他們的態度改善了......出去和別人練過之後就知道其實自己的競爭對手不僅只是這些，出去考試就知道是與一些不認識的人訓練，所以我覺得這樣看他們更加積極和投入。」

② Teacher B: 「我們希望提升學生的自理能力，就安排了三日兩夜的黃埔軍校訓練營給他們」；「我們會要求全級中四學生擔當大使帶來賓參觀學校，目的是訓練他們的說話技巧。」

③ Student: 「持續地練習寫作，我認為自己在這方面，能力有所提升。那幾年，不論是中文科及文學科的作業，還是中史科及通識科的功課，我覺得自己文筆，清晰表達所思所想，成績亦不錯，甚至文學科老師替我向報刊投稿時，文章被刊登了出來。」

3. Enhanced & broadened students' learning

➤ Student leadership programs

➤ Multilevel goal orientation development

Different perspectives:

① Teacher A: 1) 「譬如中五是義教活動，去清遠，就訓練一下溝通能力這方面，又可以體驗一下教書，使他們發掘另外的看法，或者他們到領導才能。」；2) 「主要一定都是為了培訓他們本身的品德情意，或者他們與人之間的溝通能力......」；我想我會覺我負責青山灣升學或海外升學，每年組織台灣升學團，幫助同學報讀台灣的大學，在支援他們日後升學方面成效大......」；「中文科裡會有拔尖補底。補底方面著重在試卷形式......拔尖就會有文言文班，有興趣的同學就可以多看些文言文......」

② Teacher B: 1) 「我們不是教他們如何說，而是給他們一些資料，讓他們可以言之有物，但具體如何present是他們自己的......可以訓練他們與人溝通的技巧。」；2) 「辦學宗旨中有「關懷社會」一點......我們所有中四學生都要做義工......這也是最基本的......服務社會是有的，如他們去探訪近屋邨的老人......學生會有短暫的成長......我們很難每星期都安排一次探望活動......但真的是因為『難』，有時候是受惠機構的問題，有時候是同學的問題，剛才也說到高中是畢業為重，安排上有困難......」；現時四科主科全部都有拔尖補底。有些較弱的同學其實基礎很好但成績很好成績很好的同學未上拔尖補底班。但成績越的同學，他們覺得自己被罰，未必會去，所以補底班的效能不高，所以我一直都在改善這動的形式......我現在就把輔助改成「繁瑣天地」......讓他們自己選擇在空間時到數學室做工作紙......工作紙設計有高、中、低階......」

③ Student: 1) 「學校有很多不同的節會......每年，學會都會抽時間舉辦一個「史文週」、「音樂週」等等，趁lunch time學會則會在雨天操場設立攤位遊戲......而這些攤位遊戲的設計者，都是學會中的學生幹事及會員......所以學生有機會領導同學做事......會員與幹事共同領導會員......幹事與會長也會一同會長負責起，告老師報告計劃，而通常老師不會否決我們的想法，放手讓我們去做，我們計劃好後，就分成小組，「領導其他會員」一同設立攤位遊戲。」；2) 「兩天一夜的宿營，當中有很多團隊活動......這些活動給予我們機會，一起渡過難關，記得活動總結後，我們覺得變得團結，我已對學校、對我們班的歸屬感亦增強了很多。」；「人際溝通方面，open day，全級中四學生會擔當大使，帶來賓參觀學校，學校給予學生訓練溝通能力的機會，讓他們接觸更多街外人，不單單局限於學校的老師及同學......這項活動不單提升我的溝通技巧，更提升我的應變能力。」

Conclusion:

After interviews of different stakeholders, we find out that the school has high autonomy and distributed leadership. Various activities also help improve the students' performance. However, high autonomy and multiple activities leads to difficulties for students to learn different things. What's more, the collaboration with the community is not sufficient. Besides, the school has less extra school activities for senior grade students due to examination pressure.