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Responding to the Absence of Leadership Education in the Early Years Curriculum

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by

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AN ORGANIZATIONAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

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Abstract

The field of early childhood is in a state of flux. Governments nation-wide are initiating changes, in response to the growing body of research demonstrating that early engagements with children and families creates positive outcomes for the whole community. Due to this evolution, there is a social and political expectation that early childhood professionals act as leaders. Although leadership is necessary as the field evolves, the literature suggests that early childhood professionals are hesitant to enact leadership, as their nurturing and caring characteristics are contrary to those required by traditional leadership models enacted by men. In order to empower early childhood professionals to enact leadership, research recommends a collaborative model of leadership as part of undergraduate preparation. This Organizational Improvement Plan explores a significant problem of practice: there is a political and social expectation that early childhood professionals take on a leadership role, yet there is an absence of leadership education and preparation in the early years curriculum. This problem of practice is explored through a transformational leadership lens, with an emphasis on creating a vision for change by empowering others. Within the context of this Organizational Improvement Plan, transformational leadership refers to the broadening of interests; supporting perspective taking; connecting followers' sense of identity and self to the project; and acting as a role model who excites interest.

The change process involves assessing readiness for change, communicating the need for change, possible solutions to the problem of an absence in leadership education in the early years curriculum, and a change process communication plan. Cawsey, Deszca, and Ingols' (2016) four-step Change Path Model is presented as a key application tool for each stage of the change process. The problem of practice is significant as the ability of early childhood professionals to

enact leadership is critical to the quality of care children and families receive and for the early childhood profession to be recognized as a credible profession.

Keywords: early childhood education, early childhood studies, leadership, transformational leadership, change plan

Executive Summary

The field of early childhood is rapidly changing. Early childhood professionals are now recognized as influential leaders who have an important role in improving the quality of education, care, and services for children. Although early childhood continues to score high on the political agenda for Canada's government and early childhood educators are required to respond to new leadership expectations (Atkinson, 2017; CECE, 2015), Richmon and Allison (2003) suggest that a lack of mutual understanding of what leadership means limits a person's ability to fulfill a leadership role. This Organizational Improvement Plan suggests that in order to empower others to take on a leadership role and for me to be truly transformative in my approach to change, I must lead the change rather than manage it. One specific way to inspire and lead change is through a transformational leadership framework, which in the context of this Organizational Improvement Plan refers to the broadening of interests; supporting perspective taking; connecting followers' sense of identity and self to the project; and acting as a role model who excites interest.

At the centre of using transformational leadership to address the problem of an absence in leadership education in the early year's curriculum, is a leader who aligns goals, sets expectations, models, communicates, engages, and rewards (Kezar, 2014). Within University G this would mean articulating a shared vision for change, setting mutual goals for achieving the vision, and working collaboratively through any challenges that arise. "[F]or every change proposed or achieved, someone loses something" (Harvey, 1990, as cited in Buller, 2015); therefore, the collegial approach to transformational leadership is essential to the success of the change.

In order to develop a shared vision for change, create mutual goals for achieving the vision, and collaboratively work through any challenges, Cawsey, Deszca and Ingols' (2016) Change Path Model should be implemented. This Organizational Improvement Plan proposes the use of Javidi's (2003) Change Management and Strategy Process model to collaborate, engage, and empower organizational members. Two action-planning tools were highlighted as they emphasize collaboration and engagement which is important to the collegial culture of University G. The first action-planning tool is to design the change plan collectively with the staff and instructors (Cawsey, Deszca, & Ingol, 2016). The second action-planning tool is interviews and/or surveys completed by instructors to support goal design.

As the Change Path Model and a transformational leadership framework guide the change plan, building on stakeholder interests and talent becomes of utmost importance as they have a desire to influence the direction of the organization. This Organizational Improvement Plan proposes conducting a stakeholder analysis in order to categorize them into one of the four types of stakeholders identified by Savage, Nix, Whitehead, and Blair (1991). Categorizing stakeholders will support an understanding of stakeholder reactions, which is critical to the success of change implementation. So as to engage the instructors, who are the primary stakeholders, they will work together, in collaboration with the program head, assistant program head, academic advisor, and placement coordinator, to form a professional learning community.

Successful implementation of any changes is dependent on a clear communication plan and a strategy for monitoring and evaluating the change. This Organizational Improvement Plan proposes that changes will be tracked using the PDSA model. This model allows change agents and stakeholders the opportunity to understand what ideas or tools will work or will not work and if the proposed change will be successful. Furthermore, a four-phase approach to

communicating the change plan will be scheduled based on pre, initial, midstream, and post timelines, using appropriate communication channels.

In conclusion, the task of advancing University G's mission "to maintain a closely-knit community-oriented learning environment . . . of linked knowledge, skills and values required to excel in the 21st century workplace" (Anonymous, 2004, p. 4) by increasing leadership preparation and education in the ECS program, can be overwhelming and tedious. This Organizational Improvement Plan, however, emphasizes that any change plan cannot be successful without the support and collaboration of stakeholders. Change and emotion are inseparable (Hargreaves, 2004). As a result, engaging and empowering instructors in the change plan will allow them to feel represented in the change process (Frankel & McKay, 1997), which can have sizeable benefits to the success of the change.

Acknowledgments

Completing this doctorate would not have been possible without the support of several people. Most importantly, my family. Thank you to my partner who was patient when I pulled out my computer on our family vacations. To my 5-year-old daughter who continuously reminded me that there is a time for work and a time for play. To my 2-year-old daughter who was born during my first year of studies, and was my place of calm when I didn't know if I would be able to balance a new born baby and a doctorate. To my mom who, from day one, reminded me that the finish line was near and I would survive.

A special thank you to my friend and manager who cheered me on along the way. She was supportive and forgiving when my doctorate responsibilities exceeded my work responsibilities. Thank you for keeping me grounded and continuously reminding me that I am capable. She shared some words of wisdom with me when I began my journey, and looking back, she was right. She said, completing a doctorate is not necessarily about intelligence. It's about perseverance.

Thank you to the friends I made along the way. I'm not sure I would have made it to the end without the support and encouragement of Tina and Mahwish. Thank you for being my support system and sharing in our fears and successes.

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Acronyms

AMAP (Academic Management and Programs Committee)
CECE (College of Early Childhood Educators)
CoP (Community of Practice)
ECS (Early Childhood Studies)
ELECT (Early Learning for Every Child Today)
IQAP (Institutional Quality Assurance Process)
MTCU (Ministry of Colleges, Training and Universities)
OCAI (Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument)
OIP (Organizational Improvement Plan)
PDSA (Plan, Do, Study, Act Model)
PESTE (political, economic, social, technological, and environmental factors)
PLC (Professional Learning Community)
POP (Problem of practice)
RECEs (Registered Early Childhood Educators)
SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Time-Bound)

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCATION AND PROBLEM

This chapter addresses the following problem of practice (POP): the absence of leadership education and preparation in the early year's curriculum, despite the political and social expectation that early childhood professionals should take on a leadership role. This chapter begins by defining and framing this POP, followed by an articulation of my leadership position and lens statement. Subsequent to this analysis is the organizational context; guiding questions regarding the POP; my leadership-focused vision for change; and an analysis of the organization's change readiness.

Leadership Problem of Practice

The POP is the absence of leadership education and preparation in the early year's curriculum, despite the political and social expectation that early childhood professionals should take on a leadership role. *Curriculum* can be defined as all of the experiences a student has in school. It includes a planned sequence of what students are scheduled to learn, how they will learn it, and how their learning is demonstrated and assessed (Kelly & Melograno, 2004). Students from the Early Childhood Studies (ECS) program at University G graduate with a diploma in Early Childhood Education, an honours degree in Early Childhood Studies, and the eligibility to register with the College of Early Childhood Educators (CECE). Therefore, the curriculum should reflect the knowledge and skill set in the field and what the regulatory body expects of early childhood professionals. As is, the curriculum does not do this.

The ECS program at University G was developed in 2003. The program's curriculum was established based on the historical belief that early childhood education is a babysitting job and women's work (Rodd, 2013). As a result, the current curriculum focuses solely on the role of an early childhood educator working in childcare settings as caregivers, without acknowledgement

for specialized skill sets including assessment and intervention; therapeutic play interventions; and the vital responsibility they have in a multidisciplinary team (Ministry of Education, 2007).

The instructors who teach in the ECS program do so on a part-time basis while working full-time or part-time in various areas of the field where they experience, first-hand, the increased recognition for the profession. It was realized through interviews with the instructors that, as a result of this leadership disconnect between the current curriculum and instructors' practices, they are finding it difficult to meet the outdated course outcomes while maintaining relevancy with the current vision, policies, and practices of the field (see Appendix A).

Early childhood educators are traditionally recognized for their role in assessing children's developmental abilities and needs, designing curriculum to address children's development, planning programs and environments for play, and maintaining healthy social and emotional development for children (CECE, 2016). However, the field of early childhood is rapidly changing. There is a growing body of research that demonstrates early engagement with children and families leads to positive outcomes for the whole community (Beach, et al. 2004; Galinsky, 2006; Rodd, 2013; Williams, Biscaro, & Van Lankveld, 2006). As such, early childhood professionals are now recognized as influential leaders who have an important role in improving the quality of education, care, and services for children. This acknowledgement for their leadership role is important for "early childhood [professionals] to be recognized as a credible profession with unique expertise that is different from yet equal to other professions" (Rodd, 2013, p. 1).

Although early childhood continues to score high on the political agenda for Canada's government and early childhood educators are required to respond to new leadership expectations (Atkinson, 2017; CECE, 2015), Richmon and Allison (2003) suggest that a lack of

mutual understanding of what leadership means limits a person's ability to fulfill a leadership role. Similarly, Rodd (2013) suggests that an accepted definition of leadership for early childhood has yet to be developed. Consequently, the majority of early childhood educators are not comfortable or competent taking on a leadership role (Ebbeck & Waniganayake, 2003).

The next section will frame the POP including the following content: the organizational models and theories that influence the POP; a literature review on leadership in the field of early childhood education; a PESTE analysis of the POP; and an analysis of internal and external data that influence the POP.

Framing the Problem of Practice

Historical Background

University G first opened its doors in 2002. When the ECS program was developed, it was done so with the intention of preparing students to work as early childhood educators in childcare centres. The curriculum for the ECS program has not been revised since then; however, the role of the early childhood educator has evolved and they are now being employed in multiple settings including elementary schools, hospitals, rehabilitation centres, and childhood grief support groups. This increase in employment opportunities demonstrates that early childhood professionals and their expertise is valued and this evolution requires progression in our program curriculum to reflect the expectation of early childhood educators and professionals as leaders in the field (Rodd, 2013).

The history of early childhood education is marked by sporadic additions of programs including kindergarten in the late 1800s; nurseries and childcare in the early 1900s; nursery schools in the 1920s; Head Start in the 1960s; early intervention programs in the 1970s; and pre-kindergarten in the 1980s/1990s (Goffin, 2013). There was limited social and political interest in

this sporadic progression until around the 1990s when early childhood education experienced escalating growth as more and more women entered the work force. In addition, there was an increase in publicized findings on early brain development; economic and cost-benefit analyses; and early childhood program evaluation results, all of which instigated a shift in perception for the field from "early care" to "early education and care" (Atkinson, 2013; Goffin, 2013).

Kagan and Kauerz (2007) suggest that the "educationalizing" of early childhood education was a significant moment in the evolution to the field. "Educationalizing" the field required early childhood education to develop content standards, identify learning outcomes for children, assess children's learning, and address alignment with K-12 standards. This newfound attention also created demand for accountability, consistent quality across program settings, and equitable access for all children (Kagan & Kauerz, 2007).

As a result of this new perception and understanding of the field and the profession, the Ontario government passed the Early Childhood Educators Act in 2007. The act includes: a definition of what constitutes the practice of the profession; a requirement for professionals to be members of the CECE in order to practice the profession; and title protection authorizing only members of the CECE to use the titles "early childhood educator" or "registered early childhood educator". This act established the CECE, which officially opened its doors in September of 2008 (CECE, 2011).

The CECE is responsible for regulating and governing Ontario's Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs) in the public interest. It regulates the profession by establishing and enforcing: registration requirements; ethical and professional standards for RECEs; requirements for continuous professional learning; and complaints and discipline process for professional misconduct, incompetence and incapacity. Most important to this OIP is the

CECE's vision of "leadership in early learning and care by trusted, accountable professionals" (CECE, 2011). As the field progresses, the CECE's vision demands leadership development for pre-service early childhood professionals.

Theoretical Frameworks

This POP is framed by feminist influence on organizational theory. To better understand the connectedness of the feminist perspective, I imagine the theory as ripples in water. When a rain drop hits a lake, the impact creates ripples across the body of water. To put this in the context of my POP, recent ripples in the field have caused plans for change in the ECS program, which in turn, will impact University G. Similarly, the quality of the ECS program can create positive or negative ripples in the organization and the type of professional the students become, which impacts the quality of services offered in the field, rippling into the level of quality education, care, and support children and families receive (Manning, 2013).

Feminist influence on organizational theory underscores two important factors for curriculum adaptations in a collegial institution (such as University G): innovation and inclusiveness. According to the feminist perspective, post-secondary institutions can be viewed as "webs of inclusion" whereby they adapt to the changing world (Manning, 2013). Feminists see "the world as a total system of interconnected, uniquely important parts, rather than as independent, competitive, isolated, and unequal entities" (Lipman-Blumen, 1992, p. 187). This inclusiveness is important to the collegial culture of University G because it allows for membership and participative decision making from instructors who have the knowledge and experience in their fields (Manning, 2013). Through the permeable boundaries of inclusion, innovation and responsiveness to the changing field flows (Weaver, 2017).

Gronn (2010) suggests that we learn what we know from the experiences we have; therefore, this POP is also considered through a social learning theory lens. Similar to the connectedness and inclusiveness of the feminist perspective, Bandura's social learning theory suggests that our actions influence others. According to Bandura, we learn by internalizing the information that we observe (Attention and Retention) and when the opportunity arises, we recall that information/observation and imitate it (Reproduction and Motivation) (Bandura, 1977, as cited in Kumpulainen & Wray, 2002).

In the context of this POP, Aubrey (2011) and Nupponen (2006) suggest that leadership development for early childhood professionals is often limited to role modelling of others and on-the-job learning. As a result, this OIP encourages membership and participative decision making emphasized by the feminist lens. It supports instructors with modelling the following leadership competencies which are important for future early childhood professionals to adopt: inspire direction; develop quality relationships; and encourage the best in oneself and others (Brown, 2001; Conger, 1999; Kotter, 1999) (see Figure 1.1).

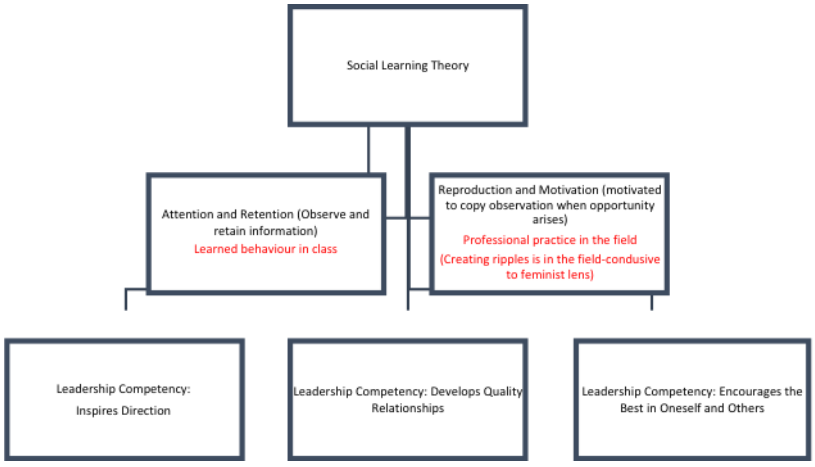

Figure 1.1 Social Learning Theory. Adapted from Bandura (1977)

Literature Review: Leadership in the Field of Early Childhood Studies

The Evolving Profession. Over the past ten years, there has been a shift in the understanding and appreciation for early childhood education. There is a growing consensus that early learning begins in infancy and can be nurtured and supported in early childhood settings (Halfon & Langford, 2015). As such, provincial governments have taken steps to integrate children into public policy by shifting responsibility for regulated child care services into "Ministries of Education and producing policies and programs that aim to 'integrate' early education and care" (Halfon & Langford, 2015, p. 132). This shift has led to increased professional expectations for early childhood professionals.

Across Canada, early childhood education and care professional associations have established ethical and professional standards. Several municipalities have implemented early childhood program quality assurance initiatives and many provinces have recently produced early learning curriculum frameworks (ELECT; How Does Learning Happen; Think, Feel, Act) which childcare staff are expected to use to guide their pedagogical practices. Furthermore, provinces, municipalities, and post-secondary institutions have initiated professional learning opportunities to examine the rationale for and use of these curriculum frameworks (Halfon & Langford, 2015; Ministry of Education, 2007). Specifically, in Ontario, the CECE has developed continuous professional learning requirements for its 45,000 registered early childhood educators, including specialized professional learning in leadership competencies (CECE, 2017; Halfon & Langford, 2015). In order to further professionalize the childcare workforce and for early childhood educators to enact leadership, early childhood professionals must become active participants in this change rather than "just observers of this moment in the field's evolution" (Goffin & Washington, 2007, p. 3).

Leadership in the field of Early Childhood Studies. Rodd (2006) suggests that the concept of leadership "has received only intermittent attention by early childhood theorists and researchers over the past three decades" (p. 4). This lack of research is due to the fact that up until just recently, early childhood education and its professionals had to fight for a seat at the political table, causing reluctance from professionals in the field to engage with the notion of leadership and research.

Waniganayake & Semann (2011) describe leadership in early childhood education and care settings as requiring qualities that include but go beyond conventional ideas of authority. Leadership within early childhood settings "… is a journey of joint inquiry, exploration and reflection that can involve everyone who believes in making a difference for children" (Waniganayake & Semann, 2011, p. 24). Likewise, Rodd (2006) states that "effective leadership in the early childhood profession is about working towards creating a community and providing a high-quality service" (p.24).

High-quality services have positive impacts on young children's development and include the following features: highly-skilled and educated staff; small class sizes and high adult-to-child ratios; a language rich environment; age-appropriate curricula and stimulating materials in a safe physical environment; and warm, responsive interactions between staff and children (Centre on the Developing Child, 2017; Ministry of Ontario, 2017). Without skilled and committed leaders, the opportunity to create and sustain high-quality learning environments is minimal (Leithwood et al., 2006; Mitgang, 2012). Rodd (2006) suggests that leadership as an early childhood professional involves the following skills: increasing and sharing knowledge of the curriculum; keeping up to date with the latest research in practice; researching your own

practice; experimenting with new approaches; and sharing your insights with others (see Figure 1.2).

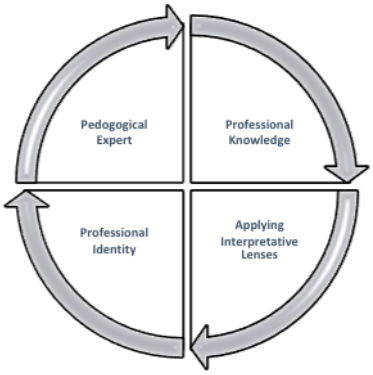

Figure 1.2. Leadership Characteristics for Early Childhood Professionals. Adapted from Rodd (2006). This figure depicts the skills ECS students are to learn if they are going to be successful and competent leaders in the field. The arrows around the circle represent two things: the continuous evolution of each characteristic and the fact that the characteristics go hand in hand.

Barriers to Leadership in Early Childhood Studies. Although leadership is necessary as the field evolves, the literature suggests that early childhood professionals are hesitant to enact leadership (Rodd, 1998; Taba et al., 1999; Woodrow & Busch, 2008). It is possible that the nurturing, caring, and supportive qualities of an early childhood professional as defined by Espinosa and Bowman (1997) and Grieshaber and Cannella (2001) are perceived by early childhood professionals as contrary to those required by traditional leadership models enacted by men. This perceived contradiction of leadership may be inhibiting early childhood professionals from having leadership aspirations. However, Hard (2011) suggests that "perhaps if leadership involved democratic and collaborative models as part of [early childhood education and care] …undergraduate preparation and in-service education, then [early childhood education and care] personnel may feel more positive about engaging in leadership" (p. 6).

PESTE Analysis

To better understand other perspectives on this POP, I have undertaken a PESTE analysis as described by Cawsey, Deszca, and Ingols (2016). PESTE is an acronym for the political, economic, social, technological, and environmental factors used to assess the context of an organization as it prepares for change. This PESTE analysis only considers social, political, and economic factors using a *Social Change Model of Leadership* perspective which "…approaches leadership as a purposeful, collaborative, values-based process that results in positive social change" (Komives & Wagner, 2009, p. xii). This OIP only focuses on social, political, and economic factors as they are the driving forces for the increased professionalism and need for leadership in the field of early childhood.

Social. Research findings highlight the positive social impact early learning programs have on children, families, and the community (Beach, et al. 2004; Galinsky, 2006; Rodd, 2013; Williams, Biscaro, & Van Lankveld, 2006). Firstly, quality education and care programs influence children's development and long term well-being (Beach, et al., 2004; Galinsky, 2006; Rodd, 2013; Williams, Biscaro, & Van Lankveld, 2006). Quality early learning programs are designed in accordance with *Early Learning for Every Child Today: A Framework for Ontario Early Childhood Settings* (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2007) to foster critical elements of a child's development including: self-regulation, the formation of early relationships, knowledge acquisition, and skill development because these elements influence a child's school readiness. School readiness helps to prevent early academic failure and behavioural problems such as dropping out of school; crime; unemployment; and psychological and physical illness in young adulthood (Anderson, et al., 2003).

Secondly, the partnership between families and educators provides a valuable opportunity for parents to meet each other, share problems and frustrations, support one another in finding solutions and also in sharing happy experiences (Corter & Pelletier, 2005; FRP Canada, 2011; Pelletier, 2006). Positive partnerships between families and educators benefit families because they observe educators who model successful techniques for teaching children and guiding behaviour; they learn about typical development; and they become aware of community resources available to them. More importantly, when families have a meaningful relationship with educators, educators can help families to see themselves as a vital part of their child's life and learning (Gordon & Browne, 2014).

These social benefits of quality demand professionals who will develop and facilitate high quality programs that continue to benefit changing communities and the evolving world. This involves participation in research and life-long professional growth, all of which were previously highlighted as qualities of early childhood leaders.

Political. Although governments are driving changes in response to the growing body of evidence that early engagement with children and their families delivers strong outcomes for whole communities (Rodd, 2013), there are still a number of political barriers the profession faces. First, Canada does not have a national childcare system. Although the formal provincial government increased the monthly financial support parents receive for childcare, many families are still left with few options. In Toronto, the average cost for infant care is $1,730 a month; toddlers $1,350 a month; and preschoolers $1,033 a month (Statistics Canada, 2014). Many families cannot afford these fees; hence, they enroll their children in unlicensed and unregulated childcare. Although unlicensed childcare is less expensive, the quality of care can be less than desirable.

One of the biggest political barriers is the rate of pay early childhood educators earn. They earn an average of $14 per hour (Statistics Canada, 2014), leading to a high employee turnover rate in childcare settings which impacts the quality of care children receive. Children require strong and reliable relationships for learning because when they are able to develop trust in their caregivers, they are more able to explore their environment. A frequent change in caregiver impacts this trust, which in turn, often impacts a child's exploration and development (Ministry of Ontario, 2014).

Institutions such as University G, can support the governments' growing recognition for the profession by preparing ECS students for their leadership role in creating positive social change. The social change model of leadership defines social change as addressing "…each person's sense of responsibility to others and the realization that making things better for one pocket of society makes things better for the society as a whole" (Komives & Wagner, 2009, p. 10).

Economic. Research suggests there are economic benefits and returns to investments in childhood development and early education. These benefits include increases in parental earnings and employment and greater educational attainment and earnings for children when they reach adulthood. Early learning programs benefit taxpayers and strengthens the economy by addressing children's problems early in life rather than later, when supports are more expensive and less effective (Barnett & Masse, 2002; Cunha & Heckman, 2006; Schweinhart, et al., 2005). In fact, the existing research suggests that "expanding early learning initiatives would provide benefits to society of approximately $8.60 for every $1 spent, about half of which comes from increased earnings for children when they grow up" (The White House, 2014). Children who attend high quality preschool programs become adults who are healthier and earn higher incomes

(Heckman & Masterov, 2007; Schweinhart, et al., 2005). They are also less likely to require special education, social services, or to be arrested (Heckman & Masterov, 2007; Schweinhart, et al., 2005).

Although a substantial body of research indicates that educational qualifications, pay and working conditions of childcare program staff are the most important indicators of quality, no province or territory has adequately responded to these issues. Many provinces have taken steps to increase the quality of early childhood education and childcare programs; however, these initiatives have been compromised by inadequate funding to develop and support the childcare workforce (Halfon & Langford, 2015, p. 132). Advocacy and the ability to "use your own voice" are leadership skills that students will develop in the ECS program, which can support further discussion for universal childcare.

In order to create a demand for leadership preparation and education at the post-secondary level, this OIP explains internal and external data that influences the POP.

Internal Data

In 2019, the ECS program at University G will participate in the Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP). Each university has an institutional quality assurance process which is particular to the institution, but which adheres to the Quality Assurance Framework approved by the Council of Ontario Universities. The process requires each institution to manage the quality of its own programs' curriculum, policies, and practices. Every five years, institutions engage in a formal review of their programs and their results are reviewed and authenticated by the relevant provincial quality assurance external review team (Ontario Universities Council on Quality Assurance, 2010). This raises concern for University G because the curriculum does not reflect the external data (described next), which is essential to the success of the ECS program

through the IQAP process.

External Data

The Early Childhood Education Report (2017) is produced by Atkinson Centre for Society and Child Development at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education/University of Toronto. It is the third assessment of provincial and territorial frameworks for early childhood education in Canada, reporting the following results (Atkinsons, 2017).

Firstly, eight out of thirteen jurisdictions (Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Saskatchewan, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Ontario, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland) have recently merged their early education, child care and family support services under a single ministry that monitors the progress of early childhood education provision through annual reports. This ensures that Canadian children and families have access to quality care and services. Secondly, provinces and territories have increased their early childhood education funding by almost $1 billion since 2014. More attention is being focused on the early childhood education workforce, with enhanced professional development requirements, more density of trained staff, and enhanced support for wages in a number of provinces and territories. Lastly, and most recently, the federal liberal government proposed free child care for children from ages two and a half to four years by the year 2020 (Atkinson Foundation, 2017). In response to these advancements, the CECE launched a Leadership Pilot Project that focuses on building leadership capacity in the early childhood education profession (CECE, 2017).

This next section will describe the organizational context which is important for understanding how the POP fits into it.

Organizational Context

Mission and Vision

In 2002, Ontario removed grade 13 from the secondary school system leading to an additional 10,000 students seeking a spot in post-secondary education nationwide (Association of Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology, 2000; Council of Ontario Universities, 2002; Gladstone, 2007). In response to this demand, two of Canada's leading post-secondary institutions partnered to created University G. University G was founded in 2002, with the intention of offering students the opportunity to achieve two credentials through four years of full-time studies, by integrating experiential learning opportunities into the traditional academic curriculum. University G's mission "to maintain a closely-knit community-oriented learning environment . . . of linked knowledge, skills and values required to excel in the 21st century workplace" (Anonymous, 2004, p. 4) is rooted in the university's core. It reveals itself in the classrooms that combine theory and practice, in the hours of field placement for all programs, in the faculty who are both academic and field experts, in the networking opportunities, in the small class sizes, in the international study opportunities, and in the research grants offered to faculty and students (Anonymous, 2018).

University G has aligned itself with the strategic mandate and vision of its partner institutions, with particular attention and focus on: internationalization and global partnerships; experiential learning; work placements and community partners; research; innovation; and the quality of graduates (see Table 1). This is important for this OIP, as the curriculum changes will have to align with University G's strategic mandate and vision.

Table 1.1

University G's Strategic Mandate and Vision

Internationalization and Global Partnership	• Study Abroad: 11 study abroad courses in 2018; 140 students in 2018; 700 students total since 2010 • International Exchanges across the globe • Visiting professor program
Experiential Learning	• Every student completes work placement as part of studies • 100-850 hours of hands on, in the field experience • More than1,600 work placements each year • Just under 2,000 community and industry partners
Research	• Focus on providing students opportunity to conduct research through RA positions • Many Research Assistants go on to present research at conferences and hold authorship on peer reviewed, published articles in academic journals.
Innovation	• Degree completion programs • New fully online degree programs • Innovative classroom designed with smart boards and various seating options (wiggle chairs, bike desks, standing tables, etc.)
Quality of Graduates	• 30% go on to graduate studies • 77% of graduates enter the workforce • 78% of those employed said their employment was highly/somewhat related to what they studied at University G.

Note: Adapted from Anonymous. (2014). *Joint Venture Agreement.* Toronto, ON: Authors.

University G provides education to approximately 5,000 students both on campus and online and across 7 focused programs. At the end of four years, students earn a diploma from the institution's college parent, as well as an honours degree from the university parent. Specifically, students who graduate from the ECS program earn a diploma in Early Childhood Education and an honours degree in Early Childhood Studies. As a result of this double credential, curriculum development for the ECS program at University G is influenced by two distinct academic units, two different institutions, and the Ministry of Colleges, Training and Universities (MTCU).

The Ministry of Colleges, Training and Universities (MTCU) is responsible for overseeing the delivery of all diploma programs offered through Ontario's colleges and universities (MTCU, 2016). In 1993, the Government of Ontario initiated program standards including vocational learning outcomes, essential employability skills, and general education requirements in order to: guarantee consistency to programming offered by different institutions; ensure graduates have the skills to be flexible professionals who continue to learn and adapt; and to take accountability for the quality and relevance of programs (MTCU, 2012). The

standardized vocational learning outcomes describe the knowledge, skills and values that graduates of a specific program are expected to demonstrate. Therefore, program objectives and course learning outcomes for all provincial early childhood education diploma programs including the ECS program must reflect the vocational learning outcomes defined by the Early Childhood Education Program Standards (MTCU, 2016) (see Appendix B).

Organizational Structure

University G is organized as a bureaucracy. Weber (1978) defined *bureaucracy* as a system of administration tasks carried out by trained professionals according to prescribed rules. The bureaucratic form has six major principles that relate to the structure of the institution (Weber, 1978).

The first principle is *formal hierarchical structure* which refers to the levels of the institution which form the basis of planning and decision making (Weber, 1978). University G exemplifies this principle within the different departments and the different levels of management, but also in the structure of the building. The building is four floors. On the top floor sits the Vice Provost and the Assistant Vice Provost who ensure that the institution fulfills the duties, responsibilities, and commitments agreed to in the partnership agreement.

Each of the 7 programs is managed by a program head and an assistant program head who all sit on the fourth, third and second floors of the building, and who make decisions related to their respective program. They are responsible for developing curriculum, hiring instructors, supporting instructors and students, scheduling classes, and collaborating with other departments in the institution. The program head also chairs the curriculum committee which is responsible for monitoring the content, quality, and requirements of the academic programs, schedule of study, and individual courses offered by the program.

On the main floor and at the bottom of the hierarchy are student services, recruitment and admissions, and student financial services. Each of these departments has a Department Head who is managed by the Vice Provost.

The second principle is *organization by functional specialty* which suggests that work is to be done by specialists, and people are organized into units based on the skills they have and the type of work that they do. The third principle is *employment based on technical qualifications* which ensures that individuals are hired based on their qualifications (Weber, 1978). These principles are evident in the various levels and departments that are made up of professionals who have specific qualifications and experiences related to their work.

The fourth principle is *management by rules* which implies the need for rules and regulations to be followed by the different levels of management in the organization (Weber, 1978). University policies and procedures act as rules and regulations that staff and students have to follow (Bacchi, 2009). Each department in the institution has a set of policies they must abide by to ensure that decisions are made without bias, which meets the fifth principle, *purposely impersonal*. This principle refers to treating all employees and customers (students) equally and to not be influenced by individual differences (Weber, 1978).

The sixth and final principle is an *"up-focused"* (purpose is to serve the stockholders and agencies that empower it) *or "in-focused" mission* (purpose is to serve the organization itself) (Weber, 1978). University G's mission to" maintain a closely-knit community-oriented learning environment . . . of linked knowledge, skills and values required to excel in the 21st century workplace" (Anonymous, 2004, p. 4) is up-focused because any decision made by the institution must be discussed with and approved by the parent institutions. The mission is also in-focused because the institution has to produce high profits and a cash stream for its own sustainability,

but also to provide a profit to the parent institutions. A simplified version of the organizational structure of University G is shown in Figure 1.3.

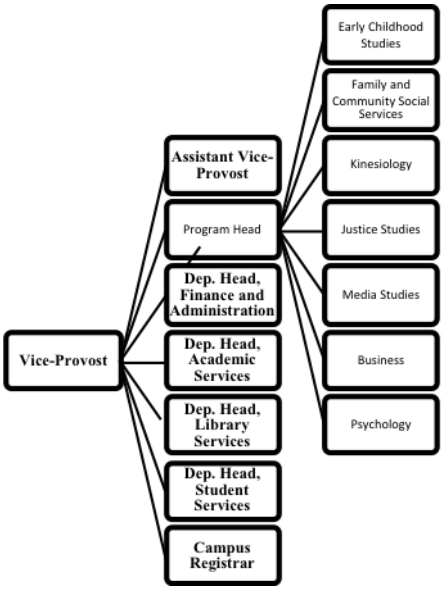

Figure 1.3. Simplified Organizational Structure of University G. Adapted from Anonymous (2014). This figure depicts the structure of University G. The Vice-Provost, Chief Academic Officer (CAO) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO), was appointed by the both partner institutions. An Executive Committee comprised of the presidents from both parent institutions oversees University G, providing guidance to the Vice Provost with decision-making and direction. The seven programs are displayed on the far right. The middle is the senior administration. Within each program there is a Program Head and an Assistant Program Head who co-manage the program. This inner-departmental structure is presented in Figure 1.4.

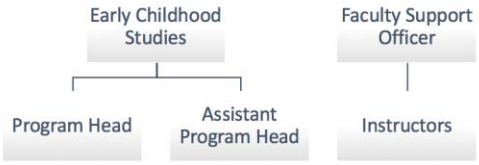

Figure 1.4. Inner-Departmental Structure of University G. Adapted from Anonymous (2014). This figure depicts the departmental structure of University G. Within each of the seven programs, there is a Faculty Support Officer who reports to the Department Head, Academic Services and provides administrative support to the program's instructors. Instructors report to the Program Head and Assistant Program Head for academic support.

Organizational Culture

Higher education institutions each have a unique culture that is "the soul of the organization- the shared beliefs and values, and how they are manifested" (Langton, Robbins, & Judge, 2016, p. 38). As such, change agents need to understand and consider an organization's unique culture if they want their change initiatives to be successful (Kezar, 2014). University G is unique because of the 300 instructors who teach at the university most are sessional instructors who also work full-time or part-time in their respective field. Instructors' esteemed knowledge and experience has created an institutional culture where collegiality is valued and implemented in all change initiatives across the institution, including curriculum adaptations (Kezar & Eckel, 2002).

As noted earlier, each program has a curriculum committee comprised of the program head, assistant program head, academic advisor, placement coordinator, three instructors from each parent institution, and two student representatives. The role of this committee is to provide input and collaborate on ideas and innovations to the program of study curriculum. The committee also ensures that the changes align with the expectations of the regulating body (CECE) and government ministry program standards. A committee system ensures that faculty have equal status, they are included in unit or institutional governance, and they play a key role in curricular, departmental, and/or institutional decision making (Brundrett, 1998; Bush, 2003, as cited in Shrifian, 2011). This is important for this OIP because when faculty are provided opportunities to be collegial with administrators and each other, they are better able to serve their students, to make their work more meaningful, and to offer a more relevant curriculum (Retallick & Butt, 2004).

Once the curriculum committee approves all changes, the Academic Management and Programs Committee (AMAP) reviews and approves the curriculum. This committee is made up of the vice provost, assistant vice provost, all department heads (non-voting members), all program heads, and three student senators. All approvals made by the AMAP committee are then sent to the Board of Undergraduate Studies and Senate. All changes must receive final approval from both the Program Committee and the Dean of the College.

This next section will describe my leadership position and lens statement with discussion for how they fit into the organizational context.

Leadership Position and Lens Statement

Upon my acceptance of the assistant program head position, my manager gave me important advice: “Remember to stay true to yourself, maintain your core values, and don’t let the power inflate your ego”. And so, began my journey of self-discovery as a leader.

Leadership Position

After careful consideration of my manager’s advice, I have become a firm believer that you cannot reach your fullest potential as a leader until you know yourself. Bell (2006) suggests that “Great leaders have abundant self-awareness” (p. 62) and when leaders have an awareness of themselves, they are more likely to lead authentically and with integrity (Bell, 2016). Self-awareness can be defined as an understanding of your values, desires, thoughts, motivations, goals and ambitions, strengths and weaknesses, and your effect on others (Frisina, 2014). Connecting to feminist influence on organizational leadership and social learning theory which both frame this POP and suggest that actions and change can ripple and impact others (Manning, 2013), it is important to note that self-awareness and an understanding of how my values, thoughts, and desires impact others is important to the success of this OIP because they will

impact those involved in the change process. Since self-awareness can take years to fully develop, I will only reflect on my core values and beliefs for the purpose of this OIP.

Since early childhood educators (and childhood education) are so influential, I have a responsibility to role model nurturing and supportive skill sets for students. A critical step in becoming a role model for students is understanding my beliefs and values. I value leading with *authenticity*. Leading with authenticity means being honest and working with integrity (Bell, 2016). I value the *trust* of the students and instructors I work with because my most important responsibility as a role model is supporting their needs. The only way I will know what their needs are is by gaining their trust and having them confide in me. It is also very important to me that I *lead by example* as a way of transforming and influencing people. "…example, like laughter, is infectious- it is capable of affecting the emotions and attitudes of anyone who is exposed to it" (Thatcher, 2012, p. 9). Lastly, I value forming *relationships* and gaining the *respect* of the students and instructors because the only way I can be an effective role model is if they respect me enough to observe, admire, and imitate my actions.

Lens Statement

Although change is necessary, all organizations resist change because "for every change proposed or achieved, someone loses something" (Harvey, 1990, as cited in Buller, 2015). This is particularly true for the instructors who will be involved in the curriculum changes. Since the university is structured as a distributed organization, where governance is shared, faculty members may view the changes as issues affecting them rather than the university because they were involved in the development of the original curriculum and the courses they teach. Instructors might interpret the change as an accusation that they were shortsighted or

incompetent in their original development of the curriculum, and they will view what's being changed or discarded (course deletions) as a part of themselves (Buller, 2015).

Consequently, in order to be truly transformative in my approach to change, I must move from trying to manage it, to leading it (Buller, 2015). At the centre of any change process is a leader who aligns goals, sets expectations, models, communicates, engages, and rewards (Kezar, 2014). Therefore, transformational leadership theory will inform my approach to leadership in this OIP. Transformational leaders create a vision for change by empowering others. They broaden the interests of their followers; support their followers in seeing different perspectives; connect followers' sense of identity and self to the project; and act as a role model who excites interest (Bass, 1990; Lowe, Kroeck, & Sivasubramaniam, 1996; Warrilow, 2012, as cited in Odumeru & Ifeanvi, 2013). Transformational leadership also relates well to feminist influence on organizational theory which frames this POP, as they both value inclusiveness and collegiality. There are a number of similarities between the theory and the ideologies of the ECS program and University G.

Firstly, transformational leadership emphasizes the importance of leaders building social networks and relationships with their followers. Relationships encourage perspective taking and they increase the leaders' and followers' success in achieving a common goal (Burns, 1978; Shelton, 2012). At the core of who I am as a leader is a desire to connect and build relationships with the students and instructors in the program. Similarly, the primary ideology of University G is that we are a family. We have smaller class sizes to allows\ instructors to build relationships with their students and it allows administrative staff to build relationships with the students and instructors in their programs. We believe that by building relationships, we are increasing student success.

Secondly, transformational leaders are role models for their followers. They are admired, respected, and trusted and their followers want to imitate them (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Similarly, the institution and I believe it is important to lead by example. The institution prides itself on having instructors who work in the field because they are able to model for the students what it means to be a professional in the field they are studying by demonstrating relevant skills and knowledge.

Thirdly, by providing students at an institutional level and program level with a variety of placement experiences, we are offering them an opportunity to find their place in the field and develop an awareness of the type of professional they want to be (thus transferring transformational leadership skills to the students). In doing so, students are offered opportunities that allow them to understand different perspectives.

This next section will describe the potential lines of inquiry stemming from the main problem; the potential factors of phenomena that contribute to and/or influence the main problem; the challenges that might emerge from the main problem; and how this OIP might be perceived/received if implementation is anticipated.

Questions Emerging from the Problem of Practice

Potential Lines of Inquiry

In reflecting on my POP and the lack of a universal definition for leadership in the field of early childhood, I have outlined a number of questions that require further exploration. Firstly, what are the specific skills/competencies students are required to learn for leadership in the field of early childhood? According to Wooden and Jamison (2009), credible leaders are honest, forward-looking, inspiring, and competent. Similarly, Semann and Waniganayake (2010) suggest that effective leaders are courageous in their beliefs, opinions, and actions. Early childhood

leaders can overcome any challenges through courage "where they dare to be different, where difficult situations are faced up to, where they take a stand over and fight for what they believe" (Rodd, 2013, p. 31).

Secondly, what are the specific skills/competencies required by instructors to teach/model leadership? *Teacher leadership* can be defined as the knowledge and skills demonstrated by teachers who positively impact student learning by formally and informally influencing students beyond the classroom. In order to influence students, instructors must possess the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to lead (Collay, 2011; CSTP, 2009; Lieberman & Miller, 2004; Lovette, 2018).

The third question pertains to support for instructors. As previously stated, early childhood professionals are hesitant to enact leadership (Rodd, 1998; Taba et al., 1999; Woodrow & Busch, 2008). As many of our instructors are early childhood educators, the third question is what do instructors need in order to support students in their own leadership development?

This OIP defines *leadership* as inspiring direction and change, developing quality relationships, and encouraging the best in oneself and others (Brown, 2001; Conger, 1999; Kotter, 1996). This OIP suggests that leadership development involves a process of self-awareness, of "finding your own voice", and developing the ability to deal with diverse circumstances in an empathetic manner (Blackmore, 2013; Brown, 2001, p.3). Considering this OIP's definition for leadership in the field of early childhood and the definition for leadership development, the final two questions stemming from this POP are: how does the program's definition for leadership and vision for leadership development fit into the university's culture

and mission and what does the early childhood sector want in terms of leadership from University G's graduates/employees?

Factors Contributing to the Problem of Practice

There are two major factors contributing to the POP. The first is the lack of an early learning laboratory school at University G. Dennis and Dailey-Herbert (2015) recommend that in order to meet students' learning needs, higher education institutions should invest in connecting learners with practitioner-based learning environments that extend beyond the traditional classroom in order to support risk-taking; establish a climate for safe communication; promote collaboration; and create meaningful connections between learning and working. According to Wilcox-Herzog and McLaren (2012), laboratory schools have three purposes; they are a place for conducting research about how children grow and develop and how the curriculum should support their learning; they provide quality care and education for children while educating post-secondary students about child development and early childhood education; and they provide training and educational presentations for the community. Laboratory schools that promote these opportunities and make best practices accessible to early childhood professionals, are inadvertently increasing the quality of early childhood programs throughout the wider community because they support the development of competent and invested educators and professionals (Langford, 2017; Wilcox-Herzog & McLaren, 2012). The absence of a laboratory school creates a barrier for the ECS program at University G to fully meet student's learning needs and support the development of their leadership skills.

The second issue is the lack of full-time faculty at University G. Although sessional instructors have current experience in their respective fields and they offer the same quality in teaching, there are many benefits of full-time faculty members. This includes curriculum

management activities, joint teaching with colleagues, and organization and participation in extracurricular activities for students. Full-time faculty also serve on committees to protect the quality of teaching and learning environments; create a climate for attracting, supporting and retaining students, through regular office hours and consistent presence; and have tenure or are on track for a tenure, allowing for freedom and responsibility to ensure the quality of the program they teach in without concern for losing one's job (Pilati, 2006). At University G, all instructors are hired on sessional contracts from either the college parent or the university parent. There is a significant difference in pay between the two contracts making it difficult for the ECS program to attract and maintain highly qualified and motivated instructors. The quality of faculty impacts the quality of learning and leadership education and preparation that students receive (Henard, n.d.).

Challenges

Students who apply to University G do so because they are expecting an educational experience that will provide them with theoretical and skills-based practice to prepare them for the workforce. Providing this experience to students is a priority of the institution as it is integrated in the mission and vision. As a result of this, students who apply to the ECS program at University G are expecting practical and theoretical experiences focused on the leadership skills they are expected to have when working in the field. The lack of leadership development and preparation in the ECS program may have led to the challenge of decreased enrollment because as is, the curriculum does not prepare students for leadership in the field.

A second challenge emerging from the lack of leadership development and preparation in the ECS program is the graduates' lack of employability. As a result of the void in the curriculum, students are graduating ill prepared for their role to act as leaders in the field.

Relating back to the feminist lens of organizational change described as ripples in water (Manning, 2013), this lack of ill preparedness of graduates from the ECS program impacts the development and implementation of programs for children and families led by ECS graduates, which impacts children's development, then impacting the whole community (Rodd, 2013).

This next section will articulate the gap between present and envisioned future state as per the organizational context; identify priorities for change; and articulate how the envisioned future state will be constructed/implemented in collaboration with organizational and/or the broader community.

Leadership Focused Vision for Change

Present and Envisioned Future State

Developing a leadership-focused vision that considers the needs of the University, the program, the students, as well as the field of early childhood will help to clarify the purpose of the change required within the organization (Cawsey, Deszca, & Ingols, 2016). When University G was developed, a four-year program offering two credentials by combining theoretical and practical experiences was innovative. However, for the past three years, enrollment across all programs at University G has decreased by 7% each year. In order to increase enrollment and maintain our target numbers as an institution, it is important for all 7 programs to reinvent themselves in a way that is innovative and appealing to prospective students. Specifically, the revision of the ECS program to include leadership preparation and education must be forward looking and consistent with the organization's vision and mission to prepare students for the evolving workforce.

Priorities for Change and Stakeholders/Organizational Balance

Attaining the desired future state requires identifying priorities for change. In any change process, there are multiple stakeholders; some who will provide support to advance the change and others who will create barriers. Changes to curriculum are linked to internal and external change drivers including: students, academic leaders and instructors (and in this case, from two institutions), and administrators. Each group of stakeholder's interests are described below.

The most important stakeholders are the students. Students accept offers to University G with the expectation that upon graduation, they are employable in their respective fields. Specifically, ECS students enter the program with the expectation that they will attain the skills and knowledge required to work as early childhood professionals. Therefore, the first priority in updating the ECS curriculum is to use this OIP's change for leadership in the field of early childhood education and the definition for leadership education and preparation to develop program outcomes that will enrich the student experience and support the development of students' leadership skills.

The second priority in updating the ECS curriculum is to utilize the instructors' knowledge, experience, and expertise to develop new program outcomes, course content, and course outcomes. This is especially important at University G as the instructors have current experience in the field and were an integral part of the development of the current and original curriculum.

The third and final priority for change is the motivation of administrators, which will be prioritized throughout the process of updating the ECS curriculum. The administrators, including program heads and department heads who sit on the AMAP committee are responsible for discussing University G's goals, how they will be met, and how they align with the culture of the

institution. Therefore, the proposed curriculum edits should support the larger administrative interests and the overall goals for University G.

Construction of Future State

The organizational development theory assumes that change occurs because leaders and change agents see the necessity of change (Kezar, 2014). This theory best relates to the process for the proposed curriculum changes because the model's procedure for change includes: goals for addressing the change; numerous group meetings to develop a shared vision and overcome any resistance; implementing professional development and support; ongoing communication; and engaging in feedback and evaluation. Similarly, the action research model of planned change seeks involvement of organizational members at each stage of the change process, and provides feedback throughout the process in order to adapt the action plan (Storberg-Walker & Torraco, 2014). Both models of change include procedures that are common practice in collegial institutions, such as University G, because faculty have equal status; they are included in unit or institutional governance; and they play a key role in curricular, departmental, and/or institutional decision making (as cited in Shrifian, 2011; as cited in Hatfield, 2006).

Both models of change will support our collegial community to create a cooperative environment that allows for shared learning and increase innovation and enthusiasm among faculty (as cited in Shah, 2012; as cited in Massy, Wilger, & Colbeck, 1994). Rodd (2015) further outlines several benefits of collegiality for early childhood educators, which is essential to this OIP as the majority of our faculty are registered early childhood educators (RECEs). These benefits include: increased likelihood for educators to view the change as positive; they show increased levels of adaptability and motivation; and they take ownership over the success of the organization.

This next section will describe organizational change readiness; address competing internal and external forces that shape change; identify key stakeholders in change readiness and the role they play; and identify strategies to overcome resistance by stakeholders.

Organizational Change Readiness

According to Weiner (2009), organizational readiness for change refers to organizational members' shared vision for change and a shared belief in their collective ability to implement the change. When organizational readiness for change is high, individuals are more likely to: initiate change; make a greater effort; show greater determination; and be more cooperative, resulting in a more effective implementation (Weiner, 2009).

Cawsey, et al. (2016) developed The Change Path Model, which is a four-stage model for promoting organizational change. The four stages in this model include: Awakening, Mobilization, Acceleration, and Institutionalization. For the purpose of identifying change readiness, this section will focus on the Awakening stage. This stage includes the following components: (1) identify problem(s) and need for change through the collection of data; (2) distribute data to organizational members in order to bring awareness of the gap between present and desired state; (3) develop a vision for change; and (4) share the visions for change and why it is needed, using multiple methods of communication (Cawsey et al., 2016).

Awakening

The first component of the Awakening stage is to answer the question, "why change?", as this is the foundation of the change process, and it is a necessary prerequisite for defining the desired future state and the vision for change. Considering what is going on within the organization, and creating dissatisfaction with the current state amongst organizational members is a crucial first step to answering this question (Cawsey et al., 2016). Analyzing data related to

enrolment numbers over the past four to five years can provide awareness for the rate of decline. Furthermore, analyzing external data including: the literature that emphasizes the expectation that early childhood professionals act as leaders; legislation and pedagogical frameworks that define the evolving role of the early childhood professional; and the literature that describes "leadership" as an important competency for professional development at a post-secondary level can bring cognizance around the disconnect between the evolving field and the knowledge and skills the ECS students graduate with. This analysis may also include program mapping that illustrates the gaps between the current curriculum and the professional expectations as outlined in legislation and pedagogical frameworks related to the field.

Although building dissatisfaction with the status quo helps to build change readiness, readiness is also dependent on "…previous organizational experiences, managerial support, the organization's openness to change, its exposure to distinguishing information about the status quo, and the systems promoting or blocking change in the organization" (Cawsey et al., 2016, p. 106). Therefore, utilizing a readiness-for-change assessment tool can further support in determining the organization's readiness for change (see Appendix C). Russell and Russell's (2006) assessment tool was chosen because the components explore collaboration, responsibility sharing, and communication efforts, all of which are valued characteristics of the collegial nature of University G.

External and Internal Forces Shaping Change

Once the "why change?" question is answered and change readiness is measured, the second component of the Awakening stage involves distributing the data to organizational members in order to bring awareness around the gap between the present and desired state. To

understand the gap between the current and desired state, external and internal forces that shape the change initiative must be considered.

As it relates to this OIP, external stakeholders are generally concerned with how the curriculum changes will impact the field, specifically the quality of professionals entering the field and the quality of care children and families will receive. External stakeholders include the field of early childhood, IQAP, and the Ministry of Training. Internal stakeholders (administrators and instructors) are more concerned with program design and its effectiveness in professional development, as well as maintaining University G's culture and mission

Naturally, the collegial culture of University G will ensure that this OIP considers the competing forces of external and internal stakeholders and attain the needed approval. Collegiality allows for leadership to be shared, and for instructors and administration (internal stakeholders) to engage with and directly influence the change process, by ensuring the curriculum changes align with the expectations of the external stakeholders (the field of early childhood, IQAP, and the Ministry of Training).

Communicating the Need for Change

The development and distribution of a shared vision for change reflects the last two components of the Awakening stage (Cawsey et al., 2016). According to Manning (2013), communicating the need for change based on the current and future state of the institution and developing a shared vision for change with consideration for how all stakeholders will be impacted by the change, is an imperative step in the process of ensuring change readiness. Cawsey et al. (2016) suggest that a vision for change is most effective if developed collaboratively. Collaboration requires a level of trust amongst stakeholders. Change agents can build a level of trust with instructors and administrators by being authentic and transparent

(Arnold, Barling, & Kelloway, 2001; Duignan, 2014). Adopting behaviour patterns of a transformational leader will support me to build trust, communicate my vision for change, as well as plan and organize the change process.

Firstly, transformational leaders are *charismatic*. This means they inspire their followers and excite them to achieve new things. Secondly, transformational leaders are *considerate*--they recognize their followers' strengths and limitations and they act as mentors to the followers who need assistance in growth and development. Thirdly, transformational leaders are *inspirational.* They redirect followers' efforts and use simple language to describe the purpose of the changes and the accompanying expectations. Fourthly, transformational leaders are *intellectually stimulating*--they encourage their followers to take different perspectives and they emphasize creativity. Lastly, transformational leaders offer *individualized consideration.* They pay individual attention to each follower whenever necessary (Bass, 1990; Lowe, Kroeck, & Sivasubramaniam, 1996).

Although a strong communication plan will be implemented (details in Chapter 3), resistance to change may arise. In order to overcome resistance and ensure the success of the implementation of this OIP, gaining followership is necessary. Followership will be gained by inviting organizational members to participate and get involved in the change; maintaining collaborative and collegial relationships with co-workers; utilizing their strengths, knowledge, and experience in the change process; and being authentic, emphasizing new standards of performance and encouraging them to think in different ways (Palmer, 2004).

Furthermore, I will inspire and excite the administration and instructors with my vision for change by providing them with my visualization on how the changes will impact the students, University G, and the field. I will communicate my plans with the instructors and encourage

them to provide me with feedback. I will encourage them to take part in the changes by utilizing their strengths and involving them in course redevelopment. I will also support them to take courses or attend workshops should they require additional training and knowledge to teach in the program. I will involve the instructors in the planning process and have them help me to organize the program calendar that outlines the sequence of courses. Most importantly, I will help them to see the benefits of the change and help them to think about where their experiences and expertise fit into the new curriculum.

Conclusion

Chapter One frames the organizational culture and context of University G and the ECS program. It presented a POP, supported by a literature review describing the evolution of the field of early childhood and the need for leadership preparation and education in the early year's curriculum. This chapter utilized the first stage of Cawsey et al.'s (2016) Change Path Model to stress the importance of assessing organizational readiness and effectively communicating the need for change, in accordance with adopting behaviours of a transformational leadership. Chapter Two will build on transformational leadership as a framework for leading the change process; analyze the next two stages of Cawsey et al.'s (2016) Change Path Model; and describe possible solutions to the POP.

CHAPTER TWO: PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Building on chapter one, which presented a POP supported by a literature review describing the evolution of the field of early childhood and the need for leadership preparation and education in the early year's curriculum, chapter two describes my leadership approach to change, as well as various framing theories of organizational change, their key assumptions, and the leadership framework chosen for this OIP. Following this, a review of various critical analyses will be conducted. Three proposed solutions for the POP will then be suggested, followed by considerations for the ethical and organizational change issues faced by University G, and how they will be addressed.

Leadership Approach(es) to Change

Leadership is a complex process with multiple dimensions (Northouse, 2016). As a result, there are several and varying definitions for leadership (Bass, 1990; Bryman, 1992; Day & Antonakis, 2012; Gardner, 1990) as well as a number of leadership theories that inform leadership practice (Martin, Cashel, Wagstaff, & Breunig, 2016). Theories of leadership attempt to "explain the factors involved either in the emergence of leadership or in the nature of leadership and its consequences" (Bass, 1990, p. 18). Some researchers conceptualize leadership as a trait or a behavior and others view leadership as a relational process (Northouse, 2016). Although leadership is highly sought-after and has proven to be an important factor in the quality of educational institutions (Wise & Wright, 2012), an accepted definition of leadership for early childhood has yet to be developed (Rodd, 2013). Wise and Wright (2012) suggest that this gap in defining leadership within the field of early childhood is due to the fact that the research related to leadership in the field is dominated by only a handful of researchers and most of this research

is conducted as dissertations. For the purpose of this OIP, the transformational leadership approach will guide the change process.

Transformational leadership has roots as early as 1978 when James McGregor Burns defined a transformational leader as one who "looks for potential motives in followers, seeks to satisfy higher needs, and engages the full person of the follower" (Denmark, 2012). As noted in chapter one, transformational leadership is a process that "changes and transforms people" (Northouse, 2016, p. 174). Transformational leaders create a vision for change by empowering others. They broaden the interests of their followers; support their followers in seeing different perspectives; connect followers' sense of identity and self to the project; and act as a role model who excites interest (Bass, 1990; Lowe, Kroeck, & Sivasubramaniam, 1996; Warrilow, 2012, as cited in Odumeru & Ifeanvi, 2013). Leithwood (1994) formulated seven dimensions of transformational leaders, specifically for those working in education: (1) building school/program vision and establishing goals; (2) creating a productive school/program culture; (3) providing intellectual stimulation; (4) offering individualized support; (5) modeling best practices and important organizational values; (6) demonstrating high-performance expectations; and (7) developing structures to foster participation (as cited in Denmark, 2012). Similar to Leithwood's (1994) seven dimensions, within the context of this OIP, transformational leadership refers to University G's collaborative and collegial approach to utilizing educators' experience, knowledge, and skillsets as a resource for guiding the change process.

Why Transformational Leadership?

"[Early childhood education] is being transformed. Almost every facet of the field's work is experiencing change" (Goffin & Washington, 2007, p. 5). As a result, the profession requires leadership that is committed to a different future; transformative; manages the discomfort of

uncertainty; and tirelessly pushes forward (Whitebook & Austin, 2009). An adaptable leader in the field of early childhood is imperative because as Goffin and Washington (2007) suggest, the absence of taking action and acquiring leadership to orchestrate change, will allow the field of early childhood to "persist as a disorganized field characterized by irregular practice, under-appreciated practitioners, and escalating intervention from external forces" (pp.7-8).

As discussed in chapter one, leadership in early childhood education can be described as the intersection of knowledge, skills, character attributes, and personality traits that motivate others to work towards change (Whitebook & Austin, 2009). As a result, transformational leadership was viewed as an effective framework for guiding the change process and preparing students for this leadership role because transformational leaders have the ability to articulate a vision and motivate others towards change, while prioritizing the mission of the organization (Bass, 1990; Lowe, Kroeck, & Sivasubramaniam, 1996; Warrilow, 2012; as cited in Odumeru & Ifeanvi, 2013).

Defining a Transformational Approach to Change

The following strengths/skills have been identified as qualities of effective leaders capable of motivating others towards change: collaboration and reflective practice, both of which relate to components of transformational leadership (see Figure 2.1).

Collaboration. Lindon et al. (2016) explains that at the heart of leadership is the ability to work with others. Similarly, three of the four components of transformational leadership encourage collaboration. The first is *idealized influence* which suggests that transformational leaders behave in admirable ways that allow followers to identify with the leader. Transformational leaders are charismatic meaning that they "display conviction, take stands and appeal to followers on an emotional level" (Das, 2012, p. 318). Transformational leaders have a

clear set of values and role model them for their followers; thus, motivating others (Das, 2012). The second is *inspirational motivation* which suggests that transformational leaders inspire and motivate others to follow new ideas. They do so by showing enthusiasm and optimism of followers, encouraging team work, and recognizing achievements (Das, 2012). The third is *individualized consideration or individualized attention* which high lights that transformational leaders pay special attention to each individual's needs. They identify the capabilities and limitations of each follower and assign tasks accordingly (Das, 2012). A transformational approach to change is critical to this OIP, because as previously discussed, University G values collegiality and developing a plan for change in collaboration with the sessional instructors who teach in the ECS program is essential to the success of the change initiative. Accordingly, the use of curriculum committee meetings as previously discussed, as a strategy for motivating others to be involved in the change process and generating solutions for the POP, is one approach to collaboration.

Reflective Practice. Research demonstrates that strong leaders continuously engage in reflective practice, in order to improve their skills and practices (CECE, 2011; Gravey & Lancaster, 2010). According to the CECE (2011) reflective practice is an essential and required professional standard for early childhood professionals. Reflective practice strengthens the profession by challenging professional values, beliefs and practices; nurturing learning and development of children; and supporting the development of high-quality programs (CECE, 2011; Ontario, Ministry of Ontario, 2014). One of the four components of transformational leadership require the ability to reflect. The component is *intellectual stimulation* which suggests that transformational leaders stimulate innovativeness and creativity, re-examination of existing assumptions, and new ways of thinking (Das, 2012). Framing this POP with a feminist lens is a

useful reflective tool. The feminist lens encourages an understanding of connectedness in that change creates ripples. Being able to identify and reflect on the multitude of effects of this POP and OIP is suggested to positively impact the development of solutions for this POP (Manning, 2013) because the process allows individuals to anticipate various outcomes.

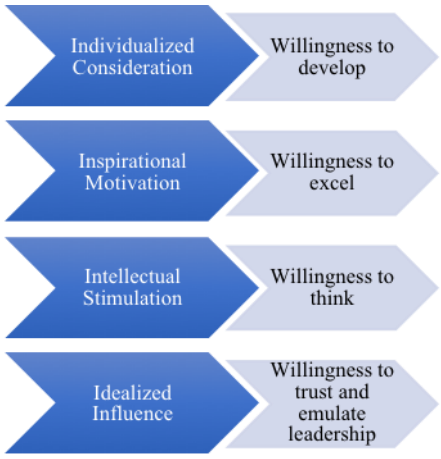

Figure 2.1. Follower Reactions to Transformational Leadership. Retrieved from Das (2012)

As illustrated in Figure 6, what emerges from transformational leadership as my approach to leading the change in this OIP, is knowledgeable and experienced instructors who feel supported and empowered to role model leadership competencies for students, who then have the knowledge and skills they require to be transformational leaders and active participants in enhancing the quality of programs for children and families.

The following section will compare and analyze relevant framing theories, followed by an explanation for my chosen framework for leading change.

Frameworks for Leading the Change Process

Chapter one highlighted that a framework for leading the change is required to guide the change leader and each participant/stakeholder through the change process. Three selected frameworks and key assumptions for each are analyzed for their application to this POP and one will be chosen to lead this OIP.

Kotter's Eight-Stage Change Process

Kotter's (2012) Eight-Stage Change Process assumes that change will not happen easily because of "inwardly focused cultures, paralyzing bureaucracy, parochial politics, a low level of trust, lack of teamwork, arrogant attitudes, a lack of leadership…and the general human fear of the unknown" (p. 22). As a result, Kotter (2012) developed an Eight-Stage Change Process designed to modify strategies, transform processes, and improve quality by addressing all of the barriers listed above (see Table 2). The first four stages challenge the status quo, stages five to seven introduce new practices, and stage eight grounds the changes into the culture of the organization (Kotter, 2012).

Table 2.1
Kotter's Eight-Stage Change Process

Establishing a sense of urgency	Examining the market and competitive realities Identifying and discussing crises, potential crises or major opportunities
Creating the guiding coalition	Putting together a group with enough power to lead the change Getting the group to work together like a team
Developing a vision and strategy	Creating a vision to help direct the change effort Developing strategies for achieving that vision
Communicating the change visions	Using every vehicle possible to constantly communicate the new vision and strategies Having the guiding coalition role model the behaviour expected of employees
Empowering broad-based action	Getting rid of obstacles Changing systems or structures that undermine the change vision Encouraging risk taking and nontraditional ideas, activities, and actions
Generating short-term wins	Planning and creating for visible improvements in performance or "wins" Visibly recognizing and rewarding people who made the wins possible
Consolidating gains and producing more change	Using increased credibility to change all systems, structures, and policies that don't fit the transformation vision Hiring, promoting, and developing people who can implement the change vision Reinvigorating the process with new projects, themes, and change agents
Anchoring new approaches in the culture	Creating better performance through customer- and productivity- oriented behaviour Articulating the connections between new behaviours and organizational success Developing means to ensure leadership development and succession

Note: Adapted from Kotter, J. P. (1996). *Leading change*. Boston: Harvard Business School.

Cawsey, Deszca, and Ingols Change Path Model

Cawsey, Deszca, and Ingols' (2016) Change Path Model assumes that the need for change is usually situated outside of the organization; leaders understand all internal aspects of the organization and therefore, are responsible for promoting the change from the top down; and leaders are responsible for providing the necessary change requirements to all those involved. In

response to these assumptions, Cawsey, Deszca, and Ingols' (2016) Change Path Model combines process and prescription utilizing four steps: (1) Awakening; (2) Mobilization; (3) Acceleration; and (4) Institutionalization (see Table 2.2).

Table 2.2
Cawsey, Deszca, and Ingols' Change Path Model

Awakening	Identify the need for change through collection of data Articulate the gap in performance between the present and future state Develop a vision for change Disseminate the vision for change and why it's needed through various communications
Mobilization	Using formal systems and structures, make sense of the desired change Assess power and culture dynamics and utilize them for better understanding the dynamics and build coalitions and support to realize the change Communicate the need for change throughout the organization and manage change recipients and stakeholders as they react to the change Leverage change agent personality, knowledge, skills and abilities, and related assets
Acceleration	Continue to systemically reach out to engage and empower others in support, planning, and implementation of the change. Support development of new knowledge, skills, abilities, and ways of thinking that will support the change Utilize tools and techniques to build momentum Manage the transition, celebrate wins and the achievement of milestones
Institutionalization	Track the change periodically and through multiple measures to assess what is needed, assess progress toward the goal and to make modifications as needed Develop and deploy new structures, systems, processes and knowledge, skills and abilities as needed, to bring life to the change

Note: Adapted from Cawsey, T. F., Deszca, G., & Ingols, C. (2016). *Organizational change: An action oriented toolkit* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Although all three models are considered effective organizational change plans, Cawsey, Deszca, and Ingol's (2016) Change Path Model was chosen to lead the change process. Through a critical analysis of University G, the Change Path Model conceptualizes the process of change, addressing the question of "how" to change and determining the content of the change. This analysis reveals information about the current state of University G, and when compared to the envisioned future state, answers the question of "what" to change.

Stage 1: Awakening. This stage requires a critical analysis of the organization, where change agents review internal and external environments to better understand the forces impacting organizational change (Cawsey, Deszca, & Ingol, 2016). The issues of decreased

enrollment at University G, as well as the lack of leadership development and preparation reflected in the ECS curriculum was analyzed in chapter one.

Stage 2: Mobilization. This stage involves using the skills and knowledge of the instructors who teach in the program to develop an ECS curriculum that will prepare students for their leadership role in the field (Cawsey, Deszca, & Ingol, 2016). In order to redevelop the curriculum, members of the curriculum committee (three instructors from each parent institution, the ECS academic advisor, the ECS field placement advisor, the ECS program head and assistant program head, and two ECS student representatives) will collaborate to ensure that the program content includes leadership as it relates to the field of early childhood. The content will be established based on a review of the current literature focused on leadership in the field of early childhood, the expectations of an early childhood professional outlined by pedagogical frameworks and the CECE, as well as contributions from each committee member according to their department and area of expertise. Bolman and Deal's (2017) leadership framework will be used to assist the committee in analyzing the problems or gaps in the curriculum and conceptualizing different approaches to prepare students for their leadership role and ensuring graduates are employable.

Stage 3: Acceleration. This stage requires implementation of the new curriculum by the instructors, with the support of the program head and assistant program head (Cawsey, Deszca, & Ingol, 2016). As mentioned in chapter one, leadership is a new phenomenon in the field of early childhood; therefore, it is difficult for our instructors who, for the most part, are early childhood professionals to model leadership for the students. In order to support this newly required knowledge, skill, and way of thinking from the instructors, we will encourage their attendance to various workshops, courses, and conferences related to leadership in the field.

Stage 4: Institutionalization. This stage is focused on assessing the progress of the change and modifying when necessary (Cawsey, Deszca, & Ingol, 2016). Current student and alumni perceptions of the curriculum as well as their preparedness for their leadership role will be gathered through surveys. The curriculum committee will analyze the data and use the results to update the curriculum as necessary. This assessment is something that we will continuously implement to update the curriculum as the field evolves.

This next section will diagnose and describe the needed changes to the ECS curriculum, using transformational leadership and Cawsey, Deszca, and Ingol's (2016) Change Path Model for leading the change.

Critical Organizational Analysis

Before developing a change plan, it is imperative for change agents to understand what needs to be achieved (Cawsey, Deszaca, & Ingol, 2016); therefore, a critical analysis of University G will be implemented. This critical analysis began in chapter one which focused on the Awakening stage. This stage answered the question, "why change?" by analyzing data related to enrolment numbers over the past four to five years; external data including: the literature that emphasizes the expectation that early childhood professionals act as leaders, legislation and pedagogical frameworks that define the evolving role of the early childhood professional, and the literature that describes "leadership" as an important competency for professional development at a post-secondary level. This analysis also included program mapping that illustrates the gaps between the current curriculum and the professional expectations as outlined in legislation and pedagogical frameworks related to the field.

In order to generate solutions to this POP and the challenges identified in the Awakening stage (gaps in the ECS curriculum, decreased enrollment, lack of employability in graduates) the

second stage of Cawsey, Deszca, & Ingol's (2016) Change Path Model will further guide this analysis. There are four key components to the Mobilization stage: (1) understand formal systems and structures and how they influence the change process; (2) assess power dynamics and organizational culture; (3) communicate the need for change and assess how change recipients and stakeholders will react to the change; and (4) leverage skills and knowledge of all change agents.

The first component of the Mobilization stage is to understand how the current organizational structure can be leveraged. It answers the question, "What existing resources or systems could support the change plan?" (Cawsey, Deszca, & Ingol, 2016). As previously noted, University G is a collegial institution. In collegial institutions, faculty have equal status, they are included in unit or institutional governance, and they play a key role in curricular, departmental, and/or institutional decision making (Hatfield, 2006; Shrifian, 2011). Leveraging this collegial model that values instructor knowledge and experience is crucial for responding to my POP because the instructors have relevant and current experiences in the field, that can be combined with their understanding about the objective of the institution, to revise and provide the best curriculum for the students.

Furthermore, collegiality is a key aspect of instructor professional growth and development. Collegial communities create a cooperative environment that allows for shared learning and increases innovation and enthusiasm among faculty (Massy, Wilger, & Colbeck, 1994; Shah, 2012). As a result, the benefits of collegiality experienced by instructors, such as having opportunities to make decisions, having their voices heard, and an increased knowledge base, may influence them to embody transformational leadership. The professional growth that happens as a result of collegiality can support instructors to recognize the benefits of being

heard, being a part of the decision-making process, and feeling valued. Therefore, they exemplify transformational leadership skills such as, being aware of their effect on students, being attentive to student's needs, supporting students in seeing different perspectives, and inspiring students to achieve their goals. They support students in developing their own self-awareness and model for students what it means to lead and be a caring and supportive early childhood professional.

The second component of the Mobilization stage is to assess power dynamics and organizational culture as they both influence perceptions and experiences for all members of the institution (Cawsey, Deszca, & Ingol, 2016). The power dynamics of University G are organized hierarchically. This means that there are stages, levels, and processes for making changes across the institution. In relation to this OIP, the first stage and process for curriculum revisions is the approvals made by the curriculum committee. In this committee, the voting members (three instructors from each parent institution and two ECS student representatives) hold the power. The power then shifts to the next level up, the Academic Management and Programs Committee (AMAP) who review and approve the curriculum proposed by the curriculum committee. All approvals made by AMAP are then sent to the Board of Undergraduate Studies and Senate. The final approval is made by both the Program Committee and the Dean of the College. Evidently, within the hierarchal structure of University G, there is a collaborative leadership approach that promotes collegiality, and cross-departmental networking and partnerships (Kezar & Eckel, 2002). This can be beneficial for the success of this OIP as multiple professionals across University G and the two parent institutions will be involved. Change initiatives which consider the perceptions and experiences of members of University G increases the likelihood of the changes to be received positively (Cawsey, Deszca, & Ingol, 2016).

The success of this OIP is also dependent on an assessment of the culture of University G. Organizational culture can be defined as an organization's character and shared assumptions, values, meanings, and beliefs (Bolman & Deal, 2013; Vanhoutte, 2005). Organizational culture can either support or challenge the change process as there is a level of learning and unlearning that needs to occur with change. Leading change with culture at the forefront – that is, understanding the current organizational culture and the envisioned future culture – is important because it increases followership and supports change agents in gaining momentum (Schein, 2010).

Cameron and Quinn (2006) developed the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI) to diagnose organizational culture (see Appendix D). The instrument helps to identify the current culture and the culture that organization members think should be developed to meet the desired future state. The instrument is a questionnaire that requires responses to six items: (1) Dominant Characteristics; (2) Organizational Leadership; (3) Management of Employees; (4) Organization Glue; (5) Strategic Emphases; and (6) Criteria of Success. The questionnaire should be completed twice. First, the organization is rated based on its current state. Then, the questionnaire is completed based on the desired future state. The results of the questionnaire formulate a culture profile (see Table 2.3) outlining the following: the dominant culture; discrepancy between present and preferred culture; the strength of the dominant culture; the congruency of the six aspects; a comparison of the culture profile with the average of the sector or industry group; and a comparison with average trends.

Table 2.3
Organizational Culture Types

Clan Culture	- Friendly environment; large family - People share commonalities - Leaders/executives are seen as mentors - Organization is held together by loyalty and tradition - Great involvement; bonded together by morals - Success is defined by addressing the needs of the clients/people - Promotes teamwork, participation, and consensus
Adhocracy Culture	- Dynamic and creative working environment - Employees take risks - Leaders/executives are seen as innovators and risk takers - Bonded by experiments and innovation - Prominence is emphasized - Long-term goal/success is to grow and create new resources - Promotes individual imitative and freedom
Market Culture	- Results-based organization that emphasizes "getting things done" - Competitive and focused on goals - Leaders/executives are hard drivers, producers, and rivals - Emphasis on winning - Reputation and success are the most important - Long-term goal/success is on rival activities and reaching goal - Competitive prices and market leadership are important
Hierarchy Culture	- Formalized and structural work environment - Procedures decide what people do - Formal rules and policy keep the organization together - Long-term goal/success is stability and results, paired with efficient and smooth execution of tasks

Note: Adapted from Cameron, K. S., & Quinn, R. E. (2006). *Diagnosing and changing organizational culture. Based on the competing values framework.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Boss.

Ultimately, as assessment of institutional culture must embody transformational leadership that motivates and inspires others to recognize the need for change. This leads us to the third component of the Mobilization stage which is to communicate the need for change and assess how change recipients and stakeholders will react to the change. Bolman and Deal (2017) developed a leadership framework to help change agents analyze organizational problems and conceptualize different approaches to an issue. Although this model covers different dimensions of change, which are not limited to communication, the framework's four frames will be used in this OIP to support communication of the need for change and assessment of how change recipients and stakeholders will react to the change.

Structural Frame. The structural frame requires organizations to provide clear goals, assign specific roles for those involved, and coordinate specific activities with relevant policies,

procedures, and chains of command. The structural leader aligns the internal processes of the organization (power and culture assessed in the second component of the Mobilization stage) to the external environment (social and political expectations that early childhood professionals enact leadership), while managing organizational dilemmas along the way (Sasnett & Ross, 2007). Rodd (2013) suggests that leadership is an important professional issue for early childhood educators around the world. Leadership is important for improving quality services for young children and families, as well as for having early childhood education recognized as a credible profession; however, an accepted definition of leadership for early childhood has not been developed yet (Rodd, 2013). For some, leadership is inspiring direction and change, developing quality relationships, and encouraging the best in oneself and others (Brown, 2001; Conger, 1999; Kotter, 1999). For others, leadership development requires a process of self-awareness, of "finding your own voice", and developing the ability to deal with diverse circumstances in an empathetic manner (Blackmore, 2013; Brown, 2001, p. 3).

Since a universal definition for leadership in the field of early childhood does not exist, it is imperative that the ECS program at University G defines leadership and that the goals for leadership education and preparation be explicit to instructors and all those involved in the curriculum reimaging. A shared understanding of the vision for the curriculum will help to assign roles and responsibilities and direct what needs to be done and by whom (Bolman & Deal, 2017). This will help to manage organizational dilemmas along the way.

Human Resource Frame. The human resource frame focuses on the needs of people. It values the feelings and relationships of people and emphasizes empowerment, support, and responsiveness to employee needs, by giving employees the power and opportunity to performs their jobs well (Bolman & Deal, 2017; Sasnett & Ross, 2007). Through this lens, there is

emphasis placed on collaborating with instructors when reviewing the curriculum and communicating about the connection between the vision of the program and program outcomes with the new expectations for early childhood professionals to take on leadership roles. The human resource lens offers a strategy for recognizing and utilizing the diverse perspectives, professional experiences, and skillsets of the instructors responsible for teaching the courses in the ECS program (Bolman & Deal, 2017; Sasnett & Ross, 2007).

Collegiality, specifically the process of curriculum committee meetings, was identified as a strength in the first component of the Mobilization stage. It aligns with the human resource frame and the last component of the Mobilization stage (leverage skills and knowledge of all change agents) because it allows the instructors, who have the front-line experience and knowledge, to collaborate, share knowledge, and develop a current and relevant curriculum for the program.

Political Frame. The political frame focuses on individual and group interests (identified in the second component of the Mobilization stage), potentially creating conflict in power. An organization's goals and decisions are developed through bargaining and negotiation between competing groups (Bolman & Deal, 2017; Sasnett & Ross, 2007). For any decision or goal made at University G, there are three groups involved: University G and the two parent institutions. All three groups have influence on curriculum changes as our committee is made up of members from all three institutions. In the past, the ECS program has experienced difficulty collaborating with both institutions because their early childhood focused programs are vastly different from University G's ECS program. It is difficult to have a discussion around leadership education and the need to broaden the ECS program's focus outside of early years' *education* because the vision of the profession is different amongst the three institutions. Therefore, it will be

imperative to utilize the transformational leadership skills, discussed in my leadership approach to change, in order to support conversations about priorities, the necessary curriculum changes, and to ensure successful bargaining and negotiating with both parent institutions.

Symbolic Frame. The symbolic frame considers symbols in the organizational culture, which is identified during the culture assessment. It focuses on vision and inspiration and it addresses people's desire for a sense of purpose and meaning in their work. The symbolic frame inspires people by creating a motivating vision and by recognizing people's performance (Bolman & Deal, 2017; Sasnett & Ross, 2007). With the development of a new curriculum, we have an opportunity to redefine our program with a new vision and set of objectives that compliments social and political expectations of early childhood professionals, mirrors instructors' professional knowledge and experiences, and supports the organization's heritage and ultimate goal to cultivate employability. As this change transpires, we enter the third stage of Cawsey, Deszca, and Ingol's (2016) Change Path Model, Acceleration.

There are three components to the Acceleration stage: (1) engage and empower others through the implementation of the change as well as with development of new knowledge, skills, and ways of thinking; (2) utilize tools to build momentum; and (3) manage the transition by celebrating small and large achievements and milestones. This stage highlights that collaboration, engagement, and empowerment are critical to the planning process.

In order to collaborate, engage, and empower organizational members, Javidi's (2003) Change Management and Strategy Process model is recommended. This model was selected because at the centre of the Change Management and Strategy Process model is the need for collaboration to develop shared goals and empower organizational members to participate in developing and implementing the change initiative (Javidi, 2003). As illustrated below, Javidi's

(2003) Change Management and Strategy Process model includes three phases: creation, design, and implementation. This model does not include an evaluation phase; however, it will be complimented by the Plan, Do, Study, Act Model (PDSA), which is a four-stage cyclic method for the purpose of adapting organizational change improvement plans, that will be discussed in Chapter three.

- Phase 1 (creation): Focuses on creating the change foundation, aligning business elements and leadership, developing focused goals, establishing sponsorships, and securing commitment and capabilities.
- Phase 2 (design): Focuses on designing the change plan, aligning the corporate mission with the change plan, and determining challenges.
- Phase 3 (implementation): Focuses on implementing the change plan, deploying change through an effective communication program, and stakeholder management.

Transformational leadership theory and Cawsey, Deszca, and Ingol (2016) suggest that it is important that others, besides the change agent, are engaged in action planning, particularly during the creating and designing phases of Jovadi's (2003) model. Actively involving others and sharing information with one another enhances the quality of action planning for most change initiatives (Cawsey, Deszca, & Ingol, 2016). Engaging instructors from the ECS program in the change initiative is particularly important for this OIP because, as previously mentioned, the majority of the instructors are early childhood professionals. Early childhood professionals are typically hesitant to enact leadership because their nurturing, caring, and supportive qualities are opposing to those qualities required by traditional leadership theories typically enacted by men (Rodd, 1998; Taba et al., 1999; Woodrow & Busch, 2008). By engaging instructors in the action-planning, we can empower them to enact leadership, which is essential if they are going to model leadership for students.

Considering Jovadi's (2003) change management model, there are two action-planning tools that emphasize collaboration and engagement which is important to the collegial culture of

University G. The first action-planning tool is to design the change plan collectively with the staff and instructors (Cawsey, Deszca, & Ingol, 2016). This would involve curriculum committee meetings, where we map the current curriculum to ministry program standards, current pedagogical frameworks, and the professional standards developed by the CECE. This will allow us to identify where leadership preparation and education is limited or lacking and it will support us in creating a plan that ensures we develop a curriculum that prepares students for their leadership role.

Secondly, interviews and/or surveys completed by instructors can support goal design. Through open ended questions, instructors' opinions and experiences with the curriculum can be gathered to identify the gaps in leadership preparation and for developing goals to fill those gaps (Cawsey, Deszca, & Ingol, 2016). Gaining insight from instructors who teach for the ECS program is important because they are sessional instructors who have current experience in the field. In the context of this OIP, instructors will have an understanding of the current expectations of the field of early childhood and how practical the goals we develop are to addressing the POP and low enrolment at University G.

Once we have worked through the Acceleration stage, including a more comprehensive understanding of University G's culture and how it will impact the change process, we will enter the fourth stage of the Change Path Model, Institutionalization. Prior to discussing this stage, this next section will discuss possible solutions to address the problem of practice.

Possible Solutions to Address the Problem of Practice

Dennis and Dailey-Herbert (2015) propose that in order to better prepare students for the workforce, higher education institutions need to reconsider their outdated traditions. Post-secondary education, and certainly at University G, is traditionally structured based on the

assumption that everyone learns the same way and at the same pace. As a result, pedagogical and curricular practices in the ECS program are informed by passive memorization of concepts, where faculty feed information to students in a lecture-based format. However, "Education and learning should never be characterized exclusively by simple and unidirectional transmission of facts, figures and concepts" (Moore, Walsh, & Risquez, 2007, p. 38) because studies on cognition and neuroscience demonstrate that people learn differently and active learning approaches can help students develop knowledge and practical skills (Cuban, 1990; Dennis and Dailey-Herbert, 2015). An active learning approach where instructors are role modeling leadership for students will increase student preparedness for enacting leadership in the field.

As a result, this OIP requires the ECS program to view the learner as "self-regulating, autonomous beings" who require individualized learning pathways and an innovative curriculum (Dennis & Dailey-Herbert, 2015, p.8). An innovative curriculum that includes interactive learning where students can engage in leadership education, helps to retain student interest and concentration, and it provides students with a sense of autonomy which can strengthen their leadership skills that are required in order to act as agents of change (Blackmore, 2013; Brown, 200; Lowery, Walker, & Thomas, 2016). Furthermore, Dennis and Dailey-Herbert (2015) recommend that in order to meet students' learning needs, higher education institutions should invest in connecting learners with practitioner-based learning environments that extend beyond the traditional classroom. Practitioner-based learning environments should support risk-taking, establish a climate for safe communication, and promote collaboration, in order to create meaningful connections between learning and working. Consequently, I am proposing the following three solutions for increasing leadership preparation and education in the ECS program, ultimately increasing enrollment at University G: update existing courses and

implement new courses, incorporate a laboratory school, and create an interactive learning space. The resources required for each solution will be considered.

Solution 1: Re-Design of ECS Courses with Leadership Elements

The first recommendation I am making is to review and revise the courses to ensure students are prepared for their leadership role (see Table 2.4) (Merenda & Martyn, 2018). Rodd (2013) suggests that leadership is an important professional issue for early childhood educators all around the world. Leadership is important for improving quality services for young children and families, as well as for early childhood education to be recognized as a credible profession; however, an accepted definition of leadership for early childhood has not been developed yet (Rodd, 2013). Although a universal definition of leadership does not exist, this OIP defines leadership as inspiring direction and change, developing quality relationships, and encouraging the best in oneself and others (Brown, 2001; Conger, 1999; Kotter, 1999; as cited in Merenda & Martyn, 2018). As previously mentioned, leadership development requires a process of self-awareness, of "finding your own voice", and developing the ability to deal with diverse circumstances in an empathetic manner (Blackmore, 2013; Brown, 2001, p. 3).

In order to prepare students for their leadership role, the courses in the ECS program should take students on a journey to discover who they are and the type of professional they want to be. An awareness of self, including recognition of strengths, limitations, and biases will support students in building quality relationships with children and families and make a lasting impact on their lives. Furthermore, the courses should prepare students to be multifaceted leaders; leaders who can evolve and adapt because the world is continually evolving, and so too will the field, the definition of leadership, and the role of an early childhood educator (as cited in Merenda & Martyn, 2018; Rodd, 2013). The ECS program can prepare students to inspire

change, build relationships, and encourage the best in others by equipping them with the following skills: judgment, critical thinking, and collaboration (Eisner, 2003; as cited in Merenda & Martyn, 2018).

Judgment is the ability to give reasons for the choices we make. This is an important skill to have because we all have biases that can impact our choices and actions in our practice. Equipping early childhood professionals with the ability to make sound judgments prepares them to recognize those biases and refrain from allowing their biases to impact their professional responsibilities (Eisner, 2003; as cited in Merenda & Martyn, 2018). As Conger (1999) explains, "Because credibility and authenticity lie at the heart of leadership, determining one's own guiding beliefs and assumptions lie at the heart of becoming a good leader" (p. 28).

Critical thinking is the ability to critique ideas and think outside of the box. Critical thinking allows early childhood educators to have a voice and share their opinions, thoughts, and knowledge. It also encourages adaptability, flexibility, and acceptance because thinking outside of the box leads to an understanding that everyone and every circumstance is unique. Therefore, critical thinking will support early childhood educators as professionals in a forever evolving world because they will be able to take different perspectives, adapt to new environments, and engage with all types of people (Eisner, 2003; as cited in Merenda & Martyn, 2018).

Collaboration is the ability to work with others collectively, cooperatively and in unity (Eisner, 2003; as cited in Merenda & Martyn, 2018). Irrespective of their role in the field, all students should be prepared to work collaboratively with others. Early childhood professionals should have knowledge of cultural variations in communication and they should be equipped with the skills to communicate effectively.

Table 2.4

Solution 1 for Preparing ECS Students for their Leadership Role

Resources	Details
Time	Approximately 3 years. • 1 year for the curriculum to be developed and reviewed by the curriculum committee • 1 year for the curriculum to be approved by AMAP, the Program Committee and the Dean of the College • 1 year to roll out the new curriculum
Human	3 instructors from both parent institutions AMAP/Program Committee Dean of the Colleges at each parent institution Program Head and Assistant Program Head of ECS Field and Career Placement Coordinators Library Services/Faculty Support Officer
Fiscal	Consultations with the "Human" resources are compensated through each individual's salary
Information	CECE Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA) Standards of Practice/Code of Ethics Pedagogical documentation/ Current research on leadership in the field of early childhood University G academic calendar
Technological	No technological requirements

Note: Developed by Merenda (2018)

Solution 2: Interactive Learning Space

The second recommendation I am making (and currently implementing) is to redesign the classroom into an interactive learning space that can be rearranged into different early years environments and that supports the development of judgment, critical thinking, and collaboration skills (see Table 2.5) (Merenda & Martyn, 2018). Gronn (2010) suggests that we learn what we know from the experiences we have; as a result, it is important for the classroom to be designed in a way that allows for interaction and hands-on learning. "Education and learning should never be characterized exclusively by simple and unidirectional transmission of facts, figures and concepts" (Moore, Walsh, & Risquez, 2007, p. 38); rather, learning should include a flow of knowledge that incorporates interaction among students. Interaction helps to engage student interest and concentration, and it provides students with a sense of autonomy which can strengthen their leadership skills. As previously stated, leadership development requires a process of self-awareness, of "finding your own voice", and developing the ability to deal with diverse circumstances in an empathetic manner (Blackmore, 2013; Brown, 2001, p. 3). When

students are invited to examine who they are as leaders in the classroom and the world, they are better equipped to acts as agents of change (Lowery, Walker, & Thomas, 2016; as cited in Merenda & Martyn, 2018).

Table 2.5
Solution 2 for Preparing ECS Students for their Leadership Role

Resources	Details
Time	Approximately 2 years. • 1 year for the planning and design of the space; 1 year for the purchasing and set-up of the space
Human	Program Head and Assistant Program Head of ECS Information and Technology experts Department Head of Finance and Administration
Fiscal	Total: ~ $100,00 SMART Boards; Double time; Furniture (tables, chairs, bike desks); Training for Instructors
Information	Research on how the environment impacts learning Research on various tables and seating and how they impact learning
Technological	6 SMART Boards; 6 keyboards and mice; Microphone; Camera

Note: Developed by Merenda (2018)

Solution 3: Professional Improvement Communities

The third recommendation I am making (and currently in the process of developing) is to develop connections with community partners to act as laboratory schools for University G (see Table 2.6) (Merenda & Martyn, 2018). Although the literature uses the term laboratory schools, within the context of this OIP, I will refer to them as professional improvement communities. According to Wilcox-Herzog and McLaren (2012), professional improvement communities have three purposes. First, they are a place for conducting research about how children grow and develop and how the curriculum should support their learning. Second, professional improvement communities provide quality care and education for children while educating post-secondary students about child development and early childhood education. Third, they provide training and educational presentations for the community. Professional improvement communities that promote these opportunities and make best practices accessible to early childhood educators and professionals, are inadvertently increasing the quality of early childhood programs throughout the wider community because they support the development of competent

and invested educators and professionals (Langford, 2017; as cited in Merenda & Martyn, 2018; Wilcox-Herzog & McLaren, 2012).

Research suggests that post-secondary students who observe children's development and interact with children in a supervised setting are better able to link theory to practice. The ability to connect theory to practice gives early childhood educators meaning and purpose to their role which increases their self-awareness. This awareness will give them the confidence they need to be leaders. Furthermore, when students are able to observe and interact with children and families in a positive setting, such as a professional improvement community, students increase their knowledge of child development and have better interactions with children and families (Wilcox-Herzog & McLaren, 2012). As noted earlier, quality relationships are important to have if early childhood educators are to inspire change (Brown, 2001; Conger, 1999; Kotter, 1999; as cited in Merenda & Martyn, 2018).

Table 2.6
Solution 3 for Preparing ECS Students for their Leadership Role

Resources	Details
Time	Approximately 1 year. • 1 year to connect with community partners and discuss the possibility of collaboration
Human	Program Head and Assistant Program Head of ECS Field Placement Coordinator for ECS Manager of Student Services Manager from each community partner
Fiscal	None, as the laboratory schools will be community partners that are already established and functioning
Information	The vision, mission, and philosophy of each potential partner
Technological	None

Note: Developed by Merenda (2018)

Proposed Solution

Solution number one, to review and revise the courses to ensure students are prepared for their leadership role, is the most important step to produce employable graduates. As discussed in chapter one, the current course outcomes do not reflect the progressed expectations for early childhood professionals to enact leadership. As a result, the instructors report difficulty meeting

the course objectives while maintaining relevance with the field. Reviewing and revising the courses to include leadership education and preparation is ideal because this will ensure our instructors are able to meet the course objectives; thus, preparing students for the workforce. Solutions two and three are still important recommendations in response to this POP; however, it is important for students to have the theoretical knowledge provided by the courses, before they can understand the practical experiences they will have in the laboratory school and the interactive learning space.

Chapter three will discuss in-depth, the implementation process of this proposed solution using a logic model. Logic models describe a project or initiative including what is planned and what results are expected. They can be used during planning and implementation of a program and serve as a visual representation of a program's resources, activities, and expected outcomes (Knowlton & Phillips, 2013). Logic models can also be used to evaluate the effectiveness of a program. The logic model was chosen because it supports: the development of common language across stakeholders; the development of a clear vision; the development of a successful plan for implementation; the means to monitor the process and results; and the process of creating and communicating a common understanding of challenges, resources, and success (Knowlton & Phillips, 2013).

Connecting to transformational leadership, this next section will discuss ethical considerations and challenges related to this POP and OIP.

Leadership Ethics and Organizational Change Issues

Ethical Leadership

As the early twenty-first century was inundated with leadership failures among business leaders in the United States (Copeland, 2016), the concept of "ethical leadership", focusing on moral and ethical aspects of leadership, emerged (Yasir & Mohamad, 2015). Numerous researchers have outlined that values based leaders are most effective as they play an instrumental role in determining the moral quality of society and of organizations (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1994; Brown & Trevino, 2006; Copeland, 2016; George, 2003; Mahsud, Yukl, & Prussia, 2010; Yasir & Mohamad, 2015). Brown et al. (2005) defines ethical leadership as "the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision making" (p. 120). The normatively appropriate conduct of ethical leaders includes honesty and fairness; use various forms of communication and reinforcement mechanisms to influence their followers' behaviours (Brown and Trevino, 2006); influencing ethical conduct of their followers by encouraging ethical behaviour (Trevino et al., 2003); considering ethics while making decisions; and enforcing policies, procedures, and practices that uphold ethical behaviour (Mayer et al., 2010).

Ethical Transformational Leadership

Derr (2012) suggests that ethics in leadership is necessary because without ethics, organizations may take on a role that can have negative implications on the entire world. This presumed astronomical impact of ethical leadership on the world led Yukl (2010) to develop criteria for evaluating ethical leadership (see Table 2.7).

Table 2.7
Criteria for Evaluating Ethical Leadership

Criterion	Ethical Leadership
Use of leader power and influence	To serve followers and the organization
Handling diverse interests of the multiple stakeholders	Attempts to balance and integrate them
Development of a vision for the organization	Develops a vision based on follower input about their needs, values, and ideas
Integrity of leader behaviour	Acts in a way that is consistent with espoused values
Risk taking in leader decision and actions	Is willing to take personal risks and actions to accomplish mission or achieve the vision
Communication of relevant information operations	Makes a complete and timely disclosure of information about events, problems, and actions
Response to criticism and dissent by followers	Encourages critical evaluations to find better solutions
Development of follower self-confidence and skills	Uses coaching, mentoring, and training to develop followers

Note: Adapted from Yasir, M. & Mohama, N. A. (2016). Ethics and morality: Comparing ethical leadership with servant, authentic and transformational leadership styles. *International Review of Management and Marketing, 6(S4),* 310-316.

In the leadership literature, transformational leadership has become synonymous with ethical leadership (Trevino et al., 2003). Burns (1978) claimed that transformational leadership is motivating, uplifting and "moral, in that it raises the level of human conduct and ethical aspirations of both the leader and the led" (p. 20). Transformational leaders align visions with followers' needs and aspirations, encourage open communication, motivate others, take risks, coach in confidence building, and promote team building (Banerji & Krishnan, 2000). Essentially, transformational leaders are authentic, function with morality, and emphasize serving the organization; thus, making transformation leadership synonymous with ethical leadership (see Table 2.8).

Table 2.8
Relations of Transformational Leadership with Criteria for Evaluating Ethical Leadership

Criterion	Ethical Leadership	Transformational Leadership
Use of leader power and influence	To serve followers and the organization	Emphasizes serving the organization (Yasir & Mohamad, 2015)
Handling diverse interests of the multiple stakeholders	Attempts to balance and integrate them	Demonstrate genuine concern for the needs and feelings of followers which brings out the best efforts from each individual (Yasir & Mohamad, 2015)
Development of a vision for the organization	Develops a vision based on follower input about their needs, values, and ideas	Develops a shared vision with followers (Bass, 1990)
Integrity of leader behaviour	Acts in a way that is consistent with espoused values	Serve as an ideal and admirable role model for followers (Bass, 1990)
Risk taking in leader decision and actions	Is willing to take personal risks and actions to accomplish mission or achieve	Challenges followers to be innovative and creative by role

	the vision	modeling risk taking (Banerji & Krishnan, 2000)
Communication of relevant information operations	Makes a complete and timely disclosure of information about events, problems, and actions	Uses a variety of communication techniques (Banerji & Krishnan, 2000)
Response to criticism and dissent by followers	Encourages critical evaluations to find better solutions	Stimulate others, enable their followers to think of old problems in new ways (Behling and McFillen, 1996; Yasir & Mohamad, 2016)
Development of follower self-confidence and skills	Uses coaching, mentoring, and training to develop followers	Inspires and motivates others (Behling and McFillen, 1996; Yasir & Mohamad, 2016)

Note: Adapted from Yasir, M. & Mohama, N. A. (2016). Ethics and morality: Comparing ethical leadership with servant, authentic and transformational leadership styles. *International Review of Management and Marketing, 6(S4),* 310-316.

Both forms of leadership: emphasize serving followers and the organization; demonstrate genuine concern for the needs and interests of their followers, attempting to balance and integrate them into the change process; develop a shared vision in collaboration with followers; are self-aware, with an understanding of how actions impact others, thus, serving as ideal and admirable role models for followers; take risks and challenge followers to be innovative and creative; share full disclosure using a variety of communication techniques; encourage divergent thinking and critical evaluation from followers; and mentor, inspire, and motivate followers (Yasire & Mohama, 2016; Yukl, 2010).

Ethical Responsibilities for University G's Early Year's Curriculum

As discussed in chapter one, this POP is framed by feminist influence on organizational theory. The connectedness of the feminist perspective can be compared to ripples in water. When a rain drop hits a lake, the impact creates ripples across the body of water. Recent ripples in the field have caused plans for change in the ECS program, which in turn, will impact University G. Similarly, the quality of the ECS program can create positive or negative ripples in the organization and the type of professional the students become, which impacts the quality of services offered in the field, rippling into the level of quality education, care, and support children and families receive (Manning, 2013). Evidently, the profession has great impact on the

world. Consequently, it is imperative for this OIP to be led by ethical and transformational leadership in order to prepare ECS graduates with the necessary skills required for them to provide the best quality of care and services to children and families.

Fisher and Tronto (1990) describe care as "a species activity that includes everything that we do to maintain, continue, and repair our 'world' so that we can live in it as well as possible" (p. 40). As the ECS curriculum will impact the world for children and families, the curriculum will be reviewed and modified in accordance with the CECE code of ethics and standards of practice (see Appendix E). The code of ethics sets out the ethical values that guide the professional practice of early childhood professionals and the standards of practice outline the expectations of early childhood professionals regarding knowledge, skills, and actions (CECE, 2016). Early childhood professionals are legally required to adhere to the code of ethics and standards of practice in order to provide the best quality of care for children. Similarly, University G has an ethical responsibility to maintain its mission "to maintain a closely-knit community-oriented learning environment . . . of linked knowledge, skills and values required to excel in the 21st century workplace" (Anonymous, 2004, p. 4). In relation to this OIP, University G's responsibility is to ensure ECS graduates are prepared to act as leaders and in accordance with ethical expectations of the CECE.

Conclusion

Chapter two focused on the planning and development of this OIP. In an attempt to increase enrollment at University G by revising the ECS curriculum to prepare students for their leadership role in the field of early childhood, transformational leadership was chosen as a potential framework and a way of thinking about the change process and this POP. Relevant research was analyzed and Cawsey, Deszca, and Ingols' (2016) Change Path Model was chosen

to lead the change process. Chapter three will outline the implementation plan, including change process monitoring, evaluation, and the change process communication plan. Chapter three will also define next steps and future considerations.

CHAPTER THREE: IMPLEMENTATION, EVALUATION, AND COMMUNICATION

Chapter three presents a change implementation plan for this OIP which includes: goals, strategies for managing the transition, a stakeholder analysis, potential implementation issues, strategies for building momentum, and limitations. Following the change implementation plan is a monitoring and evaluation plan, including tools and measure that will be used to track change. Finally, chapter three will discuss a plan to communicate the need for change and the change process.

Change Implementation Plan

Mento, Jones, and Dirndorfer (2002) suggest that change agents should view their POP within the broader organizational context as a narrow focus causes efforts from stakeholders to decrease over time. Consequently, the focus of the POP should continuously be related back to University G's mission (Mento, Jones, & Dirndorfer, 2002): "to maintain a closely-knit community-oriented learning environment . . . of linked knowledge, skills and values required to excel in the 21st century workplace" (Anonymous, 2004, p. 4). This OIP is designed to advance University G's mission by prioritizing the following: (1) engage instructors throughout the change process by providing them with opportunities for professional development, allowing for the development of new knowledge, skills, abilities, and perspectives; (2) build momentum by providing instructors with tools and techniques that will support them as they move through the change process; (3) manage the transition by acknowledging efforts and milestones along the way (Cawsey, Deszca, & Ingols, 2016).

Goals and Priorities

For each priority, specific goals will be developed to ensure that the priorities reflect the change plan and deliver on the intended outcomes of this OIP. The goals will be developed using the following SMART principles: specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time-bound (see Figure 3.1) (Cawsey, Deszca, & Ingols, 2016). Outlined below are goals and SMART identifiers related to the three priorities.

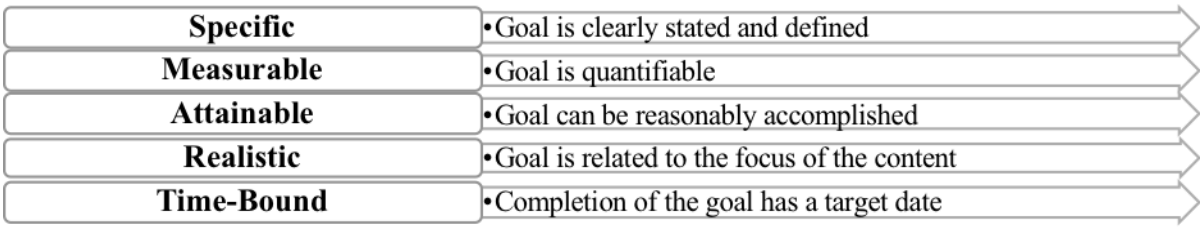

Figure 3.1. SMART Principles. Adapted from Cawsey, Deszca, & Ingols (2016)

Priority 1: Instructor Engagement (Timeline ~1 year (T))

1. Identify gaps in the curriculum, and develop desired outcomes for the new curriculum (S).
2. Select instructors to participate in the curriculum committee meetings to develop program outcomes and cultivate a plan for course redevelopment and new course development (R).
3. Continuously connect with instructors for input, consultation, and for acknowledging achievements (A).
4. Identify the cost of instructors' time for engaging in the meetings and for developing/redeveloping courses (M).
5. Define pedagogical resources related to the field of early childhood, requiring use in the program (M).

6. During redevelopment and development of courses, consult with students, field partners, early childhood professionals working in the field, curriculum development consultants, CECE, Ministry of Education, partner institutions, pedagogical frameworks, and current research (A).

Priority 2: Tools and Techniques for Building Momentum (Timeline ~6-12 months (T))

1. Develop course evaluations, program assessments, a faculty survey, and a graduate survey to receive feedback about the current and desired curriculum (S).
2. Categorization of the results from the evaluations, assessments and surveys will be received and utilized (A).
3. Compilation of assessment and evaluation results will be used for course development and redevelopment (M).
4. Distribute and provide access for instructors to pedagogical frameworks and policies that also contribute as tools for curriculum redevelopment (R).

Priority 3: Managing the Transition (Timeline ~6-12 months (T))

1. Identify stakeholders that will support the transition plan (S).
2. Organize meetings to communicate the plan (R).
3. Create a communication plan for reporting feedback to all stakeholders (A).
4. Acknowledge achievements as they occur or at least once a month (M).
5. Share milestones and key benchmark dates (A).

Managing the Transition

According to Fisher (2016), 21st century leadership requires building on stakeholder interests and talent as they have a desire to influence the direction of the organization. Similarly, Rodd (2015) suggests that "effective early years leaders work collaboratively…to create a

culture that is grounded in professional values…and collective responsibility" (p. 7). Since University G values collegiality and as many of the ECS instructors are early childhood professionals who are all accustomed to working collaboratively towards change in their work in the field, transformational leadership was chosen as the most appropriate approach to guide the ECS curriculum modifications because transformational leaders also value collegiality and collaboration (Buller, 2015).

A strategy for change that involves stakeholders will sustain University G's mission to prepare students for the workforce because it provides opportunities for experienced instructors to support the development of a shared vision, exchange information, develop new knowledge and skills, and build momentum to move forward. Figure 8 represents a recommended strategic organizational chart that visually demonstrates how transformational leadership and collaboration with stakeholders would look within the context of this OIP and the organization.

Inspired by Manning's (2013) web of inclusion, this feminist model of organizational structure depicted in Figure 3.2 encourages participation and collaboration amongst key stakeholders including instructors, students, and multiple departments across the institution. Opportunities to innovate and collaborate across departments and with instructors and students will allow for diverse strengths and talents to be utilized, ensuring the curriculum is relevant and current (Arnold, Barling, & Kelloway, 2001; Duignan, 2014).

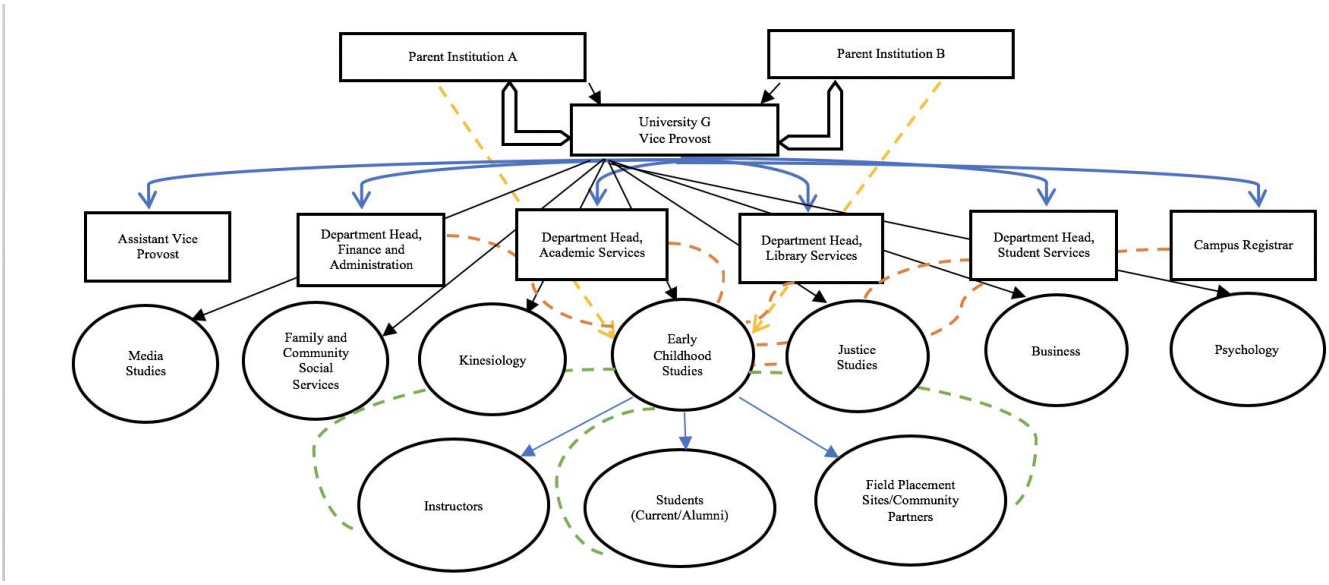

Figure 3.2. New Organizational Chart. Developed by Merenda (2019)

Before engaging in organizational change with stakeholders, it is important to develop transition plan that ensures followership and success. The steps to this transition plan include: (1) stakeholder analysis and understanding stakeholder reactions; (2) defining personnel to engage and empower stakeholders through professional learning communities; (3) outlining additional resources needed throughout the transition; (4) noting potential implementation issues; (5) building momentum; and (6) consideration for change plan limitations.

Stakeholder Analysis

When implementing a transition plan, it is important to begin by conducting a stakeholder analysis, determining stakeholders' potential reactions to the change, and deciding on the level of communication involvement with them (Cawsey, Deszca, & Ingols, 2016; Savage, Nix, Whitehead, & Blair, 1991). Cawsey, Deszca, & Ingols (2016) define *stakeholder analysis* as the identification of individuals who can impact the change or who are affected by the change. The process includes an analysis of stakeholder positions, motives, and power. In conducting a stakeholder analysis, it is important to ask the following questions (Cawsey, Deszca, & Ingols,

2016): (1) Who has the power to say 'yes' or 'no' to the change?; (2) Which departments or areas of the organization will be impacted by the change? How will they react? Who has influence in the department?; (3) Who has to adjust their behaviour for the change to be successful?; and (4) Who has the potential to support the change and who has the potential to disrupt the change?

Savage, Nix, Whitehead, and Blair (1991) define four types of stakeholders and their expected reactions to change (see Figure 3.3). First, the *supportive stakeholder* who is the most ideal and has the highest potential for cooperation. At University G, this is likely the senior administrators who sit on AMAP. Second, the *marginal stakeholder* who is indifferent to the change, but may create difficulties if not informed and involved. At University G, the two parent institutions are likely to be marginal stakeholders. Third, the *non-supportive stakeholder* who is potentially threatening and requires additional attention. Fourth, the *mixed-blessing stakeholder* who has both great potential and who is a potential threat. At University G, the instructors will either be non-supportive or mixed-blessing stakeholders.

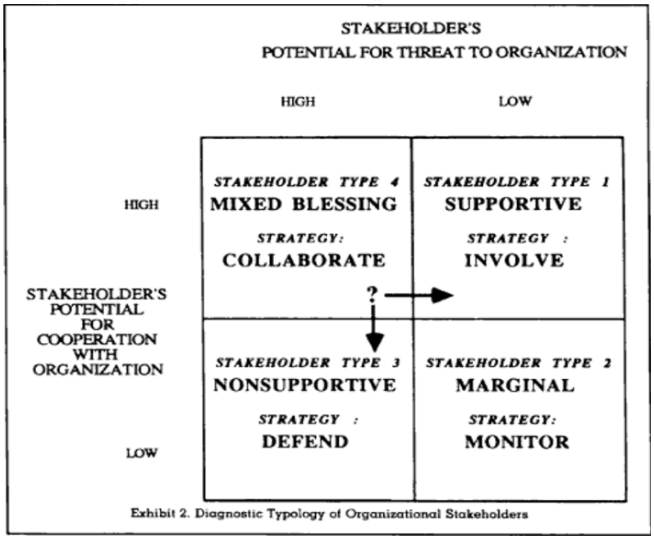

Figure 3.3. Four Types of Stakeholders. Retrieved from Savage, Nix, Whitehead, & Blair (1991)

Understanding stakeholder reactions is critical for a successful change implementation. Reactions to change can be understood through organizational tools such as change teams, transparency and communication, and stakeholder maps (Cawsey, Deszca, & Ingols, 2016). According to Cawsey, Deszca, and Ingols (2016), change teams (curriculum committee at University G) allow for increased dialogue, shared expertise, and an understanding of internal and external perspectives and reactions. Transparency and communication, within the change team and throughout the organization, around the rationale and processes required for implementing the change, will prevent unnecessary challenges and support stakeholder recognition of the benefits of the change (Boundless, n.d.). Lastly, developing and continuously reviewing a stakeholder map (see Figure 3.4), which contains information around stakeholders' wants and needs; potential responses to change; levels of power and influence; effects of status quo; and benefits and restrictions of the change, provides change agents with an understanding of stakeholders' evolving reactions (Cawsey, Deszca, & Ingols, 2016).

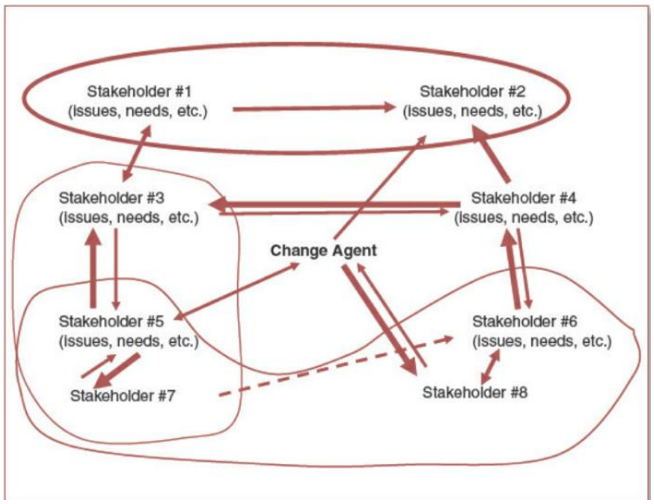

Figure 3.4. Stakeholder Map. Retrieved from Cawsey, Deszca, & Ingols (2016)

Change plans may need revisions in response to any concerning reactions from stakeholders. Concerns from stakeholders may arise for many reasons including the way the

change plan was communicated, a lack of evidence presented to support rationale the change initiative, limited or negative experience with change, and organizational mistrust (Cawsey, Deszca, & Ingols, 2016). When concerns are presented by stakeholders, it is important that change agents address them immediately in order for stakeholders to feel heard and respected. The collegial culture of University G that embraces collective decisions and two-way communication is an important asset to the revision plan. When stakeholders feel as though they are understood, their concerns are heard, and they are part of the conversations, they are more likely to embrace the change (Cawsey, Deszca, & Ingols, 2016).

Engaging and Empowering Stakeholders

The primary stakeholders involved in providing engagement and leadership in reviewing and revising the ECS curriculum are the program head and assistant program head, the academic advisor, the placement coordinator, and instructors from both parent institutions who teach at University G. Since the instructors are sessional, they have experience and expertise both in teaching and in the field of early childhood, which is essential for the success of the future curriculum.

So as to engage the instructors, they will work together, in collaboration with the program head, assistant program head, academic advisor, and placement coordinator, to form a professional learning community (PLC). The purpose of a PLC is to improve the skills and knowledge of instructors through collaboration, sharing of expertise, and professional dialogue (Abbott, Guisbond, Levy, & Sommerfeld, 2014; DuFour & Eaker, 2009). Bolam et al. (2005) defines a PLC as a collective effort to enhance student learning; promoting and sustaining professional development; building knowledge through inquiry and sharing of expertise; and analyzing and using data for reflection and improvement. This is different from the change team.

The change team's role encompasses broad levels of the change, whereas, the PLC is a smaller group mandated to ensuring the change unfolds successfully by ensuring instructors who are not on the change team are aware of the changes and are provided opportunities for learning and skill sharing.

To begin, the program head and assistant program head will create and establish the PLC with instructors who are adaptable and eager to learn and share knowledge. The PLC meetings will be scheduled once a month, with voluntary participation, as the instructors are sessional. Information gathered and shared amongst members of the PLC will be distributed to other staff and instructors who are unable to meet regularly.

Additional Resources Needed

Referring back to the PESTE analysis, there is a political, social, and economic demand for early childhood professionals to lead, develop, and facilitate high quality programs in accordance with Ontario's pedagogical documents (ELECT, How Does Learning Happen?, Think, Feel Act), and with federal policies and legislation. Therefore, it is important to provide instructors with opportunities for research and professional development in order to increase knowledge of policies and pedagogy for best practices in the classroom. In order to further support best practices in the classroom, environmental and financial resources are required to redesign the physical space of the ECS classroom. This includes SMART boards, various seating (wiggle chairs, exercise balls, bean bag chairs, chairs on wheels, elevated chairs), tables (bike desk, standing table, floor table), and fidget toys.

Potential Implementation Issues

Issues around change implementation are expected and unavoidable, as resistance and conflict have proven to be a common part of the expanding process towards change (Frankel & McKay, 1997). This is especially true for the instructors as their perceptions of importance of the new practices and the level of difficulty for implementation will influence their response to the change (Guskey, 1987). Frustration is an overwhelming response to mandated change because instructors feel unable to achieve their own purposes, to fulfil their own missions, and to have themselves heard and respected (Hargreaves, 2004). An effective leader responds to what is happening and supports those individuals affected by change (Heifets & Linsky, 2006).

This POP is framed by feminist influence on organizational theory. As described in chapter one, the connectedness of the feminist perspective can be thought of as ripples in water. When a rain drop hits a lake, the impact creates ripples across the body of water. Framing the POP in this way will support the instructors in understanding that recent ripples in the field have cased plans for change in the ECS program and it is our responsibility to respond to them. Table 3.1 highlights three potential implementation issues and how they might be addressed.

Table 3.1
Potential Implementation Issues and Plans for Addressing the Issues

Potential Implementation Issue	Plan for Addressing Issue
Lack of understanding around the change plan • Instructor attitude towards change is dependent on how clearly the new policies, programs, and/or practices are presented to them (Doyle & Ponder, 1997).	Using a variety of communication tools, ensure vision and problem of practice are clearly communicated to instructors Collaborate with the PLC to identify concerns and confusion, respond appropriately and to build momentum
Resistance from instructors • Instructor attitude towards change is dependent on how well the new policies, programs, and/or practices are associated with the instructors' teaching philosophy and practices (Doyle & Ponder, 1997).	Identify reasons for resistance Collaborate with the PLC and instructors to discuss approaches for incorporating teaching philosophy and practices into the new curriculum and for adopting new practices to support the new curriculum
Financial resources for engaging instructors • Instructor attitude towards change is dependent on instructors' approximation of the extra time and effort the new policies, programs, and practices require compared to the benefits the changes are likely to give way (Guskey, 1988).	Currently we do not have full time faculty and all of our instructors are sessional. Involvement and engagement in the process of implementing the change will require compensation for all instructors involved.

Note: Developed by Merenda. (2019).

Building Momentum

Building momentum is the second part of the Acceleration stage in Cawsey, Deszca, and Ingols' (2016) Change Path Model. In order to resolve potential issues and build momentum amongst stakeholders, especially the instructors, it is important to develop a compelling and collective change vision (Cawsey, Deszca, & Ingols, 2016). Instructors need to be emotionally committed to the change process in order to embrace the change, step outside of their comfort zone, and commit to a new curriculum (Kotter, 2012). Given our instructors are sessional and have current professional experience in the field of early childhood, many already feel passionate about ensuring their courses correlate with their professional practices and the evolving field. However, this does not negate the fact that a significant amount of time, energy, and resources are needed to carry the change process, leading to exhaustion and diverting instructors from the end goal (Fisher, 2016; Kotter, 2012b).

Reminding instructors of the need for change throughout the process will be beneficial in combating exhaustion and inspiring continued followership (Cawsey, Deszca, & Ingols, 2016). Developing a shared vision with common goals and ways to achieve them will onset the change process; however, in an effort to keep momentum high, achievements should be communicated from the start and throughout the entire process (Cawsey, Deszca, & Ingols, 2016; Kotter, 2012b). Although celebrating achievements is a part of the Acceleration stage of Cawsey, Deszca, and Ingols' (2016) Change Path Model, celebrating small and large milestones and achievements throughout the process is thought to be most effective in this OIP as this practice warrants commitment from instructors from start to end.

Limitations

Developing a shared vision with common goals and ways to achieve them, and celebrating small and large achievements throughout the change process is important for building and maintaining momentum; however, this does not resolve limitations. There are three potential change plan limitations: lack of full-time faculty, organizational structure, and challenges associated with transformational leadership.

The first and largest limitation to this change plan is the lack of full-time faculty. Unlike many post-secondary programs that have full-time or tenured faculty who teach and research in their areas of expertise, all of the programs at University G are taught by sessional instructors who are also working in their respective fields. While the instructors' current and relevant experience in the field supports student learning of both theoretical and practical skills, it is difficult to expect sessional instructors to commit efficient attention and time required for a successful change plan. In order to develop a long-term plan for sustainability, it is important for instructors to collaborate, reflect, and think critically about change, which is difficult when they are not employed full-time by the institution (Coughlin & Baird, 2013).

The second limitation is the structure of the institution. Since University G was created in partnership with two leading post-secondary institutions, it is limited in how much autonomy it has when any change occurs. Change at University G is a lengthy process and not always viable because any change initiative has to be approved by the two parent institutions. This structure means that there are many powerful stakeholder perspectives that can limit the change (Wise & Write, 2012), creating feelings of frustration and defeat for all those involved (Rodd, 2015). In this context, it becomes more important for the change leader of this OIP to advocate to the

parent institutions around the importance of the curriculum changes, both internally and for social and political benefits.

Finally, although transformational leadership was chosen as the most effective framework for leading this OIP (Bass, 1990; Lowe, Kroeck, & Sivasubramaniam, 1996; Warrilow, 2012, as cited in Odumeru & Ifeanvi, 2013), there are limitations to this approach. First, transformational leaders focus on the big picture, making it easy to overlook key components that affect the overall success of the change initiative. As a result, it is important for transformational leaders to have a followership that includes people who are detail oriented. Second, transformational leaders may be more drawn to mentor and motivate those who show an increased enthusiasm for the change. This could lead to more time and attention given to a specific group of people, allowing them more opportunity to succeed and creating resentment from those receiving less attention. Third, being a leader who motivates and inspires others to commit to the change initiative creates risk for employee burn out. As a result, it is important for transformational leaders to encourage a balanced lifestyle, where stakeholders are inspired to be a part of the change process, but do not jeopardize their health or commitment to family in the process (Leonard, 2018).

Change Process Monitoring and Evaluation

Throughout this OIP, Cawsey, Deszca, and Ingols' (2016) Change Path Model was used to guide the change process. Each of the four-stages, Awakening, Mobilization, Acceleration and Institutionalization, was applied to the problem of a lack in leadership education and preparation in the early year's curriculum. The final stage, Institutionalization, is where the change is tracked and measured. There are two key components to this stage: (1) regularly track the change to assess progress, make modifications, and implement strategies to lessen risk; and (2) develop and

implement new structures and systems of operation as needed, to sustain change and soundly transform the organization.

In response to the first component of the Institutionalization stage, changes will be tracked using the PDSA model (see Figure 3.5). This model provides a framework for developing, testing, and implementing changes for improvement. Using a PDSA cycle enables change agents to implement changes on a small scale in cycles, building on the learning from test cycles before wholesome implementation. This allows change agents and stakeholders the opportunity to understand what ideas or tools will work or will not work and if the proposed change will be successful. The PDSA model includes three key questions to answer before implementing test cycles: (1) what are we trying to accomplish? (the aim statement); (2) how will we know if the change is an improvement? What measures of success will we use?; and (3) what changes can we make that will result in improvement? (the change concepts to be tested) (Langley, et al., 2009) Each of the four steps in the PDSA cycle will be described within the context of this OIP.

Figure 3.5. Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA) Model. Adapted from Langley, et al., 2009

Step One: Plan

The *Plan* step in the PDSA cycle involves identifying a goal or an "aim statement" that answers the following questions: (1) what are we trying to accomplish?; (2) how will we know if the change is an improvement?; and (3) what changes can we make that will result in improvement? (Langley, et al., 2009). In answering who, what, where, and when, consideration is given to what we are aiming to achieve, the POP and possible solutions for the POP, the evidence that substantiates the POP exists, and predictions about what we may experience with each possible solution (Health Quality Ontario, 2016).

Another important task in this step is to assemble a team of instructors, or a PLC, who have knowledge and experience with the POP or opportunity for improvement. In assembling the team, it is important to recruit engaged, forward-thinking instructors who are able to support an assessment of the need for change using relevant internal and external data. Once a team is formed, it is important to identify roles and responsibilities, set timelines, and establish a meeting schedule. Together, we will examine our current curriculum using various assessments, evaluations, and surveys (see table 3.2); write a problem statement that summarizes our consensus on the POP; identify causes of the problem; and develop solutions for the POP (Health Quality Ontario, 2016).

Table 3.2

Tools for Measuring and Evaluating Outcomes

	Pre-Assessment	Post-Assessment	Outcomes to be Assessed
Course Evaluations	Upon entry into the program (those entering at the beginning of the OIP), student survey to capture/assess students' initial knowledge and awareness of leadership knowledge, expectations, skills, styles, and practices expected of the early childhood professional	Modified course evaluations that will assess increased awareness of leadership knowledge, expectations, skills, styles, and practices expected of the early childhood professional • Currently used to assess student learning and effectiveness of course content and instructor teaching style. • Will be modified to assess increased awareness of leadership knowledge, expectations, skills, styles, and practices, as well as the instructors' teaching effectiveness in preparing students for their leadership role	Students' increased awareness of what it means to be a leader in the field of early childhood studies; students' increased awareness of the expectations for early childhood professionals to be leaders; students' increased knowledge on the skills required for early childhood professionals and leaders; students' better understanding of their own leadership style; students' gain skill in effective leadership practices **Student evaluations will be developed in collaboration with ECS program heads, Open Ed, a Curriculum Development Specialist from the college partner, the Centre for Teaching and Learning from the college partner, and program coordinators and Deans from both parent institutions**
Program Assessments	In order to find the gaps and inconsistencies between the expectations of the field for early childhood professionals as leaders and the current program curriculum, as well as to ensure the program curriculum meets the requirements of the partner institutions, a program mapping with Open ED (Quality Assurance), College of ECE, Ministry of Education, partner institutions, pedagogical frameworks, and policies related to and impacting early childhood professionals will be conducted	In order to ensure the gaps and inconsistencies between the expectations of the field for early childhood professionals as leaders are met by the revised program curriculum, as well as to ensure the new program curriculum meets the requirements of the partner institutions, a program mapping with Open ED (Quality Assurance), College of ECE, Ministry of Education, partner institutions, pedagogical frameworks, and policies related to and impacting early childhood professionals will be conducted	Students' increased awareness of what it means to be a leader in the field of early childhood studies; students' increased awareness of the expectations for early childhood professionals to be leaders; students' increased knowledge on the skills required for early childhood professionals and leaders; students' better understanding of their own leadership style; students' gain skill in effective leadership practices **Program Assessments/Mapping will be developed in collaboration with ECS program heads, Open Ed, and program coordinators and Deans from both parent institutions**
Faculty Surveys	Faculty survey to capture/assess instructors' current knowledge and awareness of leadership knowledge, expectations, skills, styles, and practices expected of the early childhood professionals and the instructors' role in preparing students for leadership	Modified faculty surveys that will assess increased awareness of leadership knowledge, expectations, skills, styles, and practices expected of the early childhood professional and the instructors' role in preparing students for leadership • Faculty surveys are not currently used at a program level	Instructors' increased awareness of what it means to be a leader in the field of early childhood studies; instructors' increased awareness of the expectations for early childhood professionals to be leaders; instructors' increased knowledge on the skills required for early childhood professionals and leaders; instructors' better understanding of their own leadership style. instructors' gain

			skill in effective leadership practices **Faculty Surveys will be developed in collaboration with ECS program heads, Academic Services, and instructors who sit on the curriculum committee.**
Graduate Surveys		**Post-assessment (and continuously through the implementation, until the program has reached satisfactory):** Modified graduate surveys that will assess increased awareness of leadership knowledge, expectations, skills, styles, and practices expected of the early childhood professional for those working the field • Currently used to assess effectiveness of program curriculum in preparing graduates for the workforce • Will be modified to assess if the program curriculum prepared graduates with leadership knowledge, expectations, skills, styles, and practices adequately enough for their role in the field	Students' increased awareness of what it means to be a leader in the field of early childhood studies; students' increased awareness of the expectations for early childhood professionals to be leaders; students' increased knowledge on the skills required for early childhood professionals and leaders; students' better understanding of their own leadership style; students' gain skill in effective leadership practices **Graduate Surveys will be developed in collaboration with ECS program heads, and Student Services.**

Note: Developed by Merenda. (2019).

Step Two: Do

The *Do* step in the PDSA cycle involves testing out a solution to the POP. During this step, it is important to collect data to document problems, unexpected effects, and general observations (Health Quality Ontario, 2016). A checklist that includes specific outcomes to be met when running the first cycle may be useful in determining what goals have been met and what, if anything, can be improved (see table 3.3).

Table 3.3

Checklist of Anticipated Outcomes

Outcomes	Met	Not Met	Comments
Instructors' increased awareness of what it means to be a leader in the field of early childhood studies			
Instructors' increased awareness of the expectations for early childhood professionals to be leaders			
Instructors' increased knowledge on the skills required for early childhood professionals and leaders			
Instructors' better understanding of their own leadership style			
Instructors' gain skill in effective leadership practices			
Students' increased awareness of what it means to be a leader in the field of early childhood studies			
Students' increased awareness of the expectations for early childhood professionals to be leaders			
Students' increased knowledge on the skills required for early childhood professionals and leaders			
Students' better understanding of their own leadership style			
Students' gain skill in effective leadership practices			

Note: Developed by Merenda. (2019).

Within this OIP, a curriculum audit, consisting of five standards, will be used to question and think about where next steps need to be taken if an objective is not met. The curriculum audit will include a review of the data collected through the surveys, assessments, and evaluations conducted in consultation with the curriculum committee, Open Ed, curriculum development consultants, the CECE, the Ministry of Education, both parent institutions, and ECS instructors. The curriculum audit will analyze the success of the outcomes using the following standards: the control standard, the objectives standard, the connectivity and equity standard, the assessment standard, and the productivity standard (see table 3.4). The results of the checklist and the curriculum audit combined, will help reveal the larger challenges within the change implementation plan (Kennedy, n.d.).

Table 3.4
Curriculum Audit

Standards	Indicators
Standard One: The Control Standard	1. Are there written policies and pedagogies influencing the curriculum? 2. Is there written curriculum for all program outcomes?
Standard Two: The Objectives Standard	1. How do you monitor if the anticipated outcomes of the first PDSA cycle are being met? 2, How do you monitor if the curriculum objectives are being met? 3. What efforts are under way to ensure outcomes are met?
Standard Three: The Connectivity & Equity Standard	1. How does professional development support teaching?
Standard Four: The Assessment Standard	1. What program outcomes are assessed? In which courses and how?
Standard Five: The Productivity Standard	1. How well do facilities support the curriculum priorities?

Note: Developed by Merenda. (2019).

Step Three: Study

The *Study* step in the PDSA cycle involves looking at the data collected in step one and two and examining the success of the approach to change. As previously mentioned, through surveys, course evaluations, and program assessments, student preparedness for their leadership role and instructor knowledge and awareness of their own leadership capabilities will be measured as a cohort of students begin the program and again when the cohort finishes the program. These responses will be translated into a stacked bar chart that clearly indicates whether or not the changes are positively impacting instructors and students (see figure 3.6 for an example of a stacked bar chart with false data)

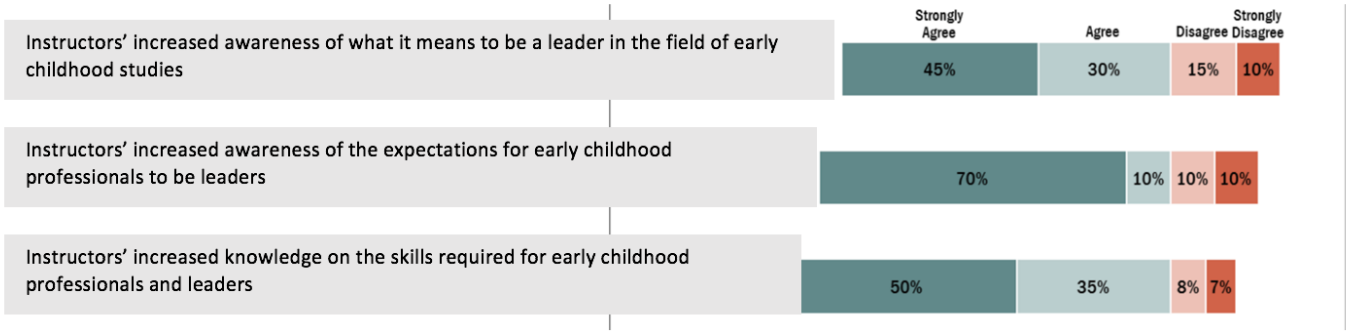

Figure 3.6. Example of a Stacked Bar Chart. Developed by Merenda (2019)

Some questions to guide this stage might be: are the outcomes being met, is the change unfolding as predicted, what are the trends, is there room for improvement, and are there unexpected or unintended side effects (Donnelly & Kurk, 2015).

Step Four: Act

The *Act* step in the PDSA cycle involves conversations about the outcomes of the change plan. If the plan was not successful, it is important to return to step one and re-examine and refine the process. If the plan was successful, the improvements should consistently be implemented when and where applicable, as the PDSA model is considered a cyclical process. If a new approach is used, it must cycle through the four steps (Langley, et al., 2009). This approach will be implemented every year at university G, as we prepare for each school year.

Change Process Communication Plan

Successful implementation of the changes to the ECS curriculum is dependent on a clear communication plan (Cawsey, Deszca, & Ingols, 2016). According to Cawsey, Deszca, and Ingols (2016), the purpose of a communication plan for change is to: (1) instill the need for change throughout the organization; (2) support stakeholders' understanding of the impact the change will have on them; (3) communicate structural or role changes that will influence how things are done; and (4) inform stakeholders of the progress along the way. In order to prepare an effective communication plan, change agents must reflect on the goal of the message, the most appropriate method of delivering the message, and anticipate how the message may be received and perceived (Rodd, 2015).

Cawsey, Deszca, and Ingols (2016) propose a four-phase approach to communicating a change plan that will help to "minimize the effects of rumors…mobilize support for the change, and…sustain enthusiasm and commitment" (p. 320). The four-phases include: (1) prechange

approval; (2) creating the need for change; (3) midstream change and milestone communication; and (4) confirming/celebrating change successes. The messages and the communication channels in which the message is delivered will vary depending on the phase (Cawsey, Deszca, & Ingols, 2016).

Communication Channels

Communication channels allow change agents and stakeholders to communicate with one another about the process, difficulties, and successes of the change process (Cawsey, Deszca, & Ingols, 2016). When a communication method does not best serve the message, the intended message may be misinterpreted creating resistance and non-compliance from stakeholders. As a result, special attention is paid to which communication channels will be used and when, as this is an essential component of the communication plan (Williams, n.d). This OIP will use three communication channels that will be integrated into the four-phase communication plan outlined below. They are: (1) *face-to-face*, which is considered the best method of communication as it allows for two-way communication; (2) *mobile,* when a message is directed towards the change team; and (3) *electronic,* in the form of email and social media for the purpose of sharing a message within the change team, but also to the larger population outside of the change team.

Four-Phase Change Plan

Prechange Approval Phase. During the Awakening Stage of Cawsey, Deszca, and Ingols (2016) Change Path Model and alongside the Plan step of the PDSA cycle, change agents target individuals who have the authority to approve change as change agents need to convince top management and key stakeholders that the change is needed. In order to successfully convince others of the need for change it is important to propose the change in phases that are attainable and manageable, and link the change to the organization's goals, plans, and priorities

(Cawsey, Deszca, & Ingols, 2016). In the context of this OIP, the senior leadership team (AMAP) and the curriculum committee that consists of instructor and staff representation from University G and both parent institutions, will be presented with an outline of the prosed changes and a high-level rational for how the proposed changes are responding to social and political expectations that early childhood professionals act as leaders and will support University G's mission "to maintain a closely-knit community-oriented learning environment . . . of linked knowledge, skills and values required to excel in the 21st century workplace" (Anonymous, 2004, p. 4). This will be conducted *face-to-face* to allow for dialogue around initial concerns, questions, and suggestions. Subsequent *email* communication will provide senior leadership and curriculum committee members with updates on the change process.

Developing the Needs for Change Phase. During the Mobilization Stage of Cawsey, Deszca, and Ingols (2016) Change Path Model and alongside the Do step of the PDSA cycle, change agents must create awareness of the need for change, because without a sense of urgency and enthusiasm for the initiative, the change plan will not move forward. In order for stakeholders to feel respected and reassured, the vision for the change should be articulated with specific steps for how the plan will be implemented and how and when they will be involved in the change (Cawsey, Deszca, & Ingols, 2016). Within the context of this OIP, the curriculum committee will develop and implement the change plan. Instructors who are not a part of the curriculum committee will be invited to participate in a PLC, for the purpose of engaging instructors to increase knowledge and adopt new practices required for the successful implementation of the revised curriculum. *Electronic* communication in the form of email, with times and dates for meetings to promote the plan will be sent to the curriculum committee and as

well as all instructors for participation in the PLC. Resources such as course outlines and curriculum mapping will also be provided.

Midstream Change Phase. During the Acceleration Stage of Cawsey, Deszca, and Ingols (2016) Change Path Model and alongside the Study step of the PDSA cycle, the change plan is unfolding and stakeholders require specific information about future plans and how things will operate. Specifically, instructors will want to know how the curriculum is being reorganized and how this reorganization will impact their job. At this time, change leaders should understand any misconceptions that are developing, provide clear communication about new roles, systems, and structures, and recognize and celebrate achievements and milestones as a way to sustain interest and enthusiasm (Cawsey, Deszca, & Ingols, 2016). This will be regularly conducted *face-to-face* with AMAP, the curriculum committee, and the PLC. A *video* or a *website story* on University G's website will outline the change plan, including the purpose and the value of the curriculum re-development. An *email* communication will be developed and a feedback process will be introduced. The feedback process will consist of monthly emails and telephone calls with members of the curriculum committee and to instructors who have indicated interest in the PLC. A training agenda will be provided so that all instructors, regardless of their involvement in the change team or PLC, can begin to learn about the new curriculum and the areas for development they will require training in, in order to successfully teach in the program.

Confirming the Change Phase. The final change of the communication plan involves communicating and celebrating the success of the change initiative which is essential during the Institutionalization Stage of Cawsey, Deszca, and Ingols (2016) Change Path Model and alongside the Act step of the PDSA cycle. This is also a time for discussing the whole change process and identifying unfinished tasks (Cawsey, Deszca, & Ingols, 2016). In the context of this

OIP, confirming the change and the progress made by the change implementation plan will be publicized to all stakeholders, including the parent institutions and students, via *electronic* announcements in the form of email and University G's website. Instructors and staff members who participated in the change plan will be encouraged to showcase their courses, provide reflective feedback on the process and plan, and share their experiences in the change process through case study publications.

The final step of the communication plan will involve the use of a Community of Practice.

Community of Practice

Communities of Practice (CoP) are "groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly" (Wenger-Trayner, 2015). As the new curriculum will require instructors to learn knew knowledge and skills, it is important to provide them with opportunities for collaboration and learning within the program and amongst instructors, but also with other professionals servicing children and families. CoPs will allow instructors to discuss challenges based on similar interests, learn more about teaching techniques and strategies, and share information.

There are three components of CoPs. First, there must be a *domain* or a shared interest between members of the group (Wenger, 1999). In the context of this OIP, the domain may be the content of a course where instructors who teach the same course create a CoP together. This CoP may include other professionals working in the field who can contribute knowledge and skills the instructors require in order to teach the course.

The second and third component relate as there needs to be a *community* where members of the domain interact and engage in shared activities and in sharing of information in order to

support the development of their *practices* (Wenger, 1999). There may be multiple CoPs, one for each course, where the instructors teaching a particular course create a community with one another, but they also collaborate with other CoPs to develop a better understanding of how the content of their course builds on other courses and sets the foundation for future learning.

Once the new curriculum is rolled out for the first time, the CoPs would initially be formed by the program head and assistant program head and instructors will be invited to participate. This will not be mandatory as the instructors are not hired full-time. The CoPs will meet on a monthly basis and will be led by designated members. The roles within the CoP include: (1) the *chair* who will be responsible for organizing the event and setting the purpose and expectations of CoP members; (2) the *facilitator* who will be responsible for identifying trends, providing support for new members, and creating discussions within the CoP; and (3) the *collaborator* who will be responsible for connecting with other communities and ensuring information is shared with all members.

Conclusion

The problem of practice (PoP) found within this OIP describes the lack of leadership education and preparation in the early years curriculum. Throughout this OIP, various understandings emerged such as the definition of leadership in the field of early childhood, the social and political push for early childhood professionals to enact leadership, how readiness of the organization for implementing this change might be addressed, organizational gaps that might create barriers, and how the potential solution could be implemented using transformational leadership. Rodd's (2015) suggestion that change is "guided by inspiration and vision for quality improvement in practitioners who act to help people and settings transition…" (p, 11) inspired the following three potential next steps.

First, this OIP discusses the importance of communication throughout the change process; however, even when the change is complete, clear communication is essential. O'Connor (2012) describes communication as "the glue that holds people together…the way they share ideas and feelings…[and] the means they use to bond and form groups" (as cited in Rodd, 2015, p. 75). In considering this statement, communication is essential in order to ensure the program's curriculum and course content continue to align with University G's mission "to maintain a closely-knit community-oriented learning environment . . . of linked knowledge, skills and values required to excel in the 21st century workplace" (Anonymous, 2004, p. 4) and the change vision developed collaboratively with instructors during the change process.

Second, the collegial culture of University G should be upheld. According to Rodd (2015) sustainable change depends on a collective responsibility shared amongst stakeholders and leaders. As a result, as indicated in this OIP, we will continue to invite instructors to share their expertise and experiences in the evolving field and with the new curriculum during our curriculum committee meetings, in order to support the change plan long-term.

Third, through the long-term use of CoPs, we can embrace a culture of ongoing learning. Rodd (2015) suggests that embracing lifelong learning fosters competent and empowered leaders, which is important to the long-term success of this change initiative. As stated in chapter one, early childhood professionals are hesitant to enact leadership (Rodd, 1998; Taba et al., 1999; Woodrow & Busch, 2008), and as most of our instructors are early childhood professionals working in the field, it is important for us to provide them with opportunities for knowledge and skill sharing as to increase their leadership competence.

Future Considerations

As indicated throughout this OIP, leadership in early childhood is to be of utmost importance for improving quality services for children and families, and for early childhood to be recognized as a credible profession. Although there is social and political expectation for better leadership in the field of early childhood, research on the importance of leadership is scarce (Muijs et al., 2004; Rodd, 2006). Rodd (2006) suggests that the concept of leadership "has received only intermittent attention by early childhood theorists and researchers over the past three decades" (p. 4). Similarly, Muijs et al. (2004), who conducted an extensive international literature review on leadership in the early years' sector, concluded that research is "limited and dominated by a relatively small number of researchers" (p. 158). As a result, future considerations around how to guide the change process must aim to better understand leadership in early childhood.

This OIP also indicated that although early childhood leaders are necessary as the field evolves, the literature suggests that early childhood professionals are hesitant to enact leadership and they do not see themselves as leaders in the field of early childhood education and care (Rodd, 1998; Taba et al., 1999; Woodrow & Busch, 2008). This may be the result of a number of factors. The field of early childhood education and care involves nurturing and caring for children, which may seem contrary to those required by traditional leadership models enacted by men (Bowman, 1997; Grieshaber & Cannella, 2001). This perceived contradiction of what a leader is and how to lead may be inhibiting early childhood professionals from having leadership aspirations. Therefore, greater research on the characteristics of early childhood leadership is necessary.

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Appendix A

Instructor Interview Questions

Professor Interview Questions (Basic)
Thank you for taking time out of your day to meet with us. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the courses you teach, as we realize the curriculum may need updating. We would like to hear your thoughts and opinions on your courses and the curriculum, and want to ensure your voice is heard. Before we get started, are you comfortable with this interview being recorded? This recording if for our use only--to be able to go over the recording and ensure we have caught everything you have expressed. If you are not comfortable with being recorded, we will only use the notes taken during the interview

1. What are you teaching now, and have you taught in the past? (Only UGH)

(When discussing the following course specific questions please discuss the specifics of each course the instructor teaches)

2. What is the purpose of … (course title)? What is the course about?

3. How do you see this course contributing to the larger program or the curriculum?

4. What are the key topics of (course title)?

5. Do you think applied or experiential learning can be included into (course title)? Perhaps you do this already. If so what do you do? If not, do you have any thoughts of how applied and experiential learning could be included?

6. The field has changed in the last five years or more. What changes have you experienced? How would like to see the changes integrated into your courses or the program?

7. Are there key topics you think should be included/taught in the Early Childhood Studies program?

8. The program would like to include key topics throughout the curriculum, from the list below do you think any of these topics could be included in (course title) and if so how?

- Diversity (family/ culture/ community)
- Special needs (diagnosis, disabilities, mental health, trauma)
- Indigenous
- Interventions/ working with children and families
- Multidisciplinary
- Culture (high risk)

9. Is there any other topics you think should be included throughout the curriculum?

10. Please have a look at the course outline, is there anything that you would change, modify or enhance to the course rationale, description and or learning objectives?

Appendix B

Synopsis of the Vocational Learning Outcomes Early Childhood Education (Ontario College Diploma)

The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to

1. design, implement and evaluate inclusive* and play-based* early learning curriculum* and programs that support children's* holistic development* and are responsive to individual children's* and groups of children's* observed abilities, interests and ideas.
2. establish and maintain inclusive* early learning environments* that support diverse*, equitable and accessible developmental and learning opportunities for all children* and their families*.
3. select and use a variety of screening tools, observation and documentation strategies to review, support and promote children's* learning across the continuum of early childhood development*.
4. establish and maintain responsive relationships* with individual children*, groups of children* and families*.
5. assess, develop and maintain safe, healthy and quality early learning environments* which meet the requirements of current legislation, agency policies and evidence-based practices* in early learning.
6. prepare and use professional written, verbal, nonverbal and electronic communications when working with children*, families*, colleagues, employers, and community partners.
7. identify, select and apply relevant legislation, regulations, CECE Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics, policies and evidence-based practice* guidelines, and interpret their impact on a variety of early learning environments*.
8. apply a developing personal philosophy of early learning in accordance with ethical and professional standards* of early childhood education practice.
9. advocate* for quality early learning environments* and collaborate with members of the early learning team, families* and community partners to establish and promote such settings.
10. engage in reflective practice, develop learning goals and maintain an ongoing professional development plan in accordance with evidence-based practices* in early learning and related fields.

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Appendix C

Organizational Change Readiness Assessment

Organizational Support Component	**Level of Agreement**
1. The organization's vision is truly a shared vision in that employees at all levels understand, value, and work toward accomplishing this vision through their daily work. 2. Decision making and authority are decentralized; that is, there are multiple levels of decision makers throughout the organization, and decision making isn't centralized at the top. 3. Employees have, in the past, actively participated in organizational decision making, goal setting, and organizational change initiatives. 4. Employees ideas and suggestions for improving their work and the organization are listened to. 5. Employees view the organization's training and development programs as effective and supportive of change-driven training needs. 6. The organization is effective at setting and achieving measurable performance goals and targets. 7. The organization effectively uses multiple communication channels to routinely and effectively communicate with employees.	
Cultural Component	**Level of Agreement**
8. The organization's culture (it's deeply held beliefs, values, and change assumptions) is open and receptive to new ideas, innovation, and change. 9. Real teamwork and collaboration exist within and between organizational work units/departments. 10. There is a high level of trust between leaders and employees. 11. When the ongoing gets tough here, people tend to stick together and help each other out. 12. Employees general feel encouraged to innovate, offer ides, and take risks. 13. During past change initiatives, employees have generally stepped up and actively participated in helping to shape and implement these changes. 14. People here generally feel that they are personally responsible for their own success.	
The Change Environment Component	**Level of Agreement**

15. People are aware of the forces driving change that exist outside the organization. 16. The proposed change and its effects on all organizational dimensions (structure, strategy, processes, workflow, systems, and so on) are clearly defined and understood by those leading the change. 17. When the change is completed, we'll be able to gauge our success with the change effort because there are clear measures to evaluate the change results. 18. The organization has successfully implemented change initiatives in the past. 19. The reason behind the coming change can be translated easily into tangible evidence that will get attention of employees. 20. The number of change initiatives currently under way feels manageable by employees who are most affected by the change. 21. The perceived benefits from the change are greater than the perceived losses or disadvantages.	
Employee Attitudes and Behaviors Component	
22. Employees feel a sense of urgency—a felt need—for change. 23. Employees have a high level of job engagement; that is, job engagement reflects employee commitment to their jobs and the company. 24. Employees feel able to make decisions and act independently concerning their daily work. 25. Innovators, entrepreneurs, and risk takers exist at all levels of the organization. 26. Employees are generally receptive to change rather than feeling that "this too shall pass". 27. When change happens, employees typically believe that they have the opportunity to influence or affect the change. 28. Employees have confidence in their managers' ability to guide them successfully through the change.	

Adapted from Russell & Russell (2006)

Note: Individuals completing the assessment should indicate their level of agreement with each statement using the following scale: -3 strongly disagree; -2 disagree; -1 slightly disagree; 0 not sure/don't know; +1 slightly agree; +2 agree; +3 strongly agree. An overall score of 0 or under indicates the organization is not ready. An overall score between 28-56, indicates that the organization has a moderate level of change readiness. An overall score between 57-84, indicates that the organization has a high level of change readiness (Russell & Russell, 2006)

Appendix D

The Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument- Current Profile

1. Dominant Characteristics	**Now**	**Preferred**
a. The organization is a very personal place. It is like an extended family. People seem to share a lot of themselves. b. The organization is a very dynamic and enter-preneurial place. People are willing to stick their necks out and take risks. c. The organization is very results-oriented. A major concern is with getting the job done. People are very competitive and achievement-oriented. d. The organization is a very controlled and structured place. Formal procedures generally govern what people do.		
Total	100	100
2. Organizational Leadership		
a. The leadership in the organization is generally considered to exemplify mentoring, facilitating, or nurturing. b. The leadership in the organization is generally considered to exemplify entrepreneurship, innovation, or risk taking. c. The leadership in the organization is generally considered to exemplify a no-nonsense, aggressive, results-oriented focus. d. The leadership in the organization is generally considered to exemplify coordinating, organizing, or smooth-running efficiency.		
Total	100	100
3. Management of Employees		
a. The management style in the organization is characterized by teamwork, consensus, and participation. b. The management style in the organization is characterized by individual risk taking, innovation, freedom, and uniqueness. c. The management style in the organization is characterized by hard-driving competitiveness, high demands, and achievement. d. The management style in the organization is characterized by security of employment, conformity, predictability, and		

stability in relationships.		
Total	100	100

4. Organizational Glue	**Now**	**Preferred**
a. The glue that holds the organization together is loyalty and mutual trust. Commitment to this organization runs high. b. The glue that holds the organization together is commitment to innovation and development. There is an emphasis on being on the cutting edge. c. The glue that hold the organization together is the emphasis on achievement and goal accomplishment. d. The glue that holds the organization together is formal rules and policies. Maintaining a smooth-running organization is important.		
Total	100	100
5. Strategic Emphases		
a. The organization emphasizes human development. High trust, openness, and participation persist. b. Organization emphasizes acquiring new resources and creating new challenges. Trying new things and prospecting for opportunity are valued. c. The organization emphasizes competitive actions and achievement. Hitting stretch targets and winning in the marketplace are dominant. d. The organization emphasizes permanence and stability. Efficiency, control, and smooth operations are important.		
Total	100	100
6. Criteria of Success		
a. The organization defines success on the basis of the development of human resources, teamwork, employee commitment, and concern for people. b. The organization defines success on the basis of having the most unique or newest products. It is a product leader and innovator.		

c. The organization defines success on the basis of winning in the marketplace and outpacing the competition. Competitive market leadership is key. d. The organization defines success on the basis of efficiency. Dependable delivery, smooth scheduling, and low-cost production are critical.		
Total	100	100

Appendix E

CECE Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice

CODE OF ETHICS

Registered early childhood educators (RECEs) are dedicated to upholding the Code of Ethics. The Code reflects the profession's core set of beliefs and values of care, respect, trust and integrity. These beliefs and values are fundamental to RECEs and guide their practice and conduct.

A. Responsibilities to Children

RECEs make the well-being, learning and care of children their foremost responsibility. They value the rights of children and create learning environments where all children can experience a sense of belonging and inclusion. RECEs foster children's joy of learning through child-centred and play-based pedagogy.

RECEs respect and nurture children's first language and/or traditional language and culture. They demonstrate a commitment to address the unique rights and needs of Indigenous children and their families. They respect each child's uniqueness, dignity and potential.

B. Responsibilities to Families

RECEs build and maintain responsive and collaborative relationships with families. These relationships are based on mutual trust, openness and respect for confidentiality. RECEs work in partnership with families, sharing knowledge and resources to support the well-being and learning of children.

RECEs recognize and respect the uniqueness and diversity of families. They provide meaningful opportunities for families to engage in and contribute to the learning environment and their child's experiences.

C. Responsibilities to Colleagues and to the Profession

RECEs build positive relationships with colleagues by demonstrating respect, trust and integrity. They support, mentor and collaborate with colleagues, including students aspiring to the profession.

RECEs value lifelong learning and reflective practice and engage in the Continuous Professional Learning program. Through their practice and leadership, RECEs support the advancement of the profession in their workplaces and in the wider community. They recognize that their conduct as professionals contributes to the public's trust in the profession.

D. Responsibilities to the Community and to the Public

RECEs provide and promote high quality early years programs and services to support children and families. They build connections and collaborate with community partners to enhance programs and promote the integration of services. RECEs communicate the value and importance of early childhood education in their communities and to the broader public. They advocate for the well-being of children and families.

(College of Early Childhood Educators, 2017, p. 7)

STANDARDS OF PRACTICE

Standard I: Caring and Responsive Relationships

A. Principle

Registered early childhood educators (RECEs) understand that strong, positive relationships contribute to healthy child development and are necessary for children's well-being and learning. Building and maintaining caring and responsive relationships with children, families and colleagues is fundamental to the practice of RECEs.

B. Knowledge

RECEs:

1. Are knowledgeable about the research and theories related to the impact of caring and responsive relationships on children's development, learning, self-regulation, identity and well-being.
2. Are knowledgeable about a range of strategies that support ongoing positive interactions with children and families.
3. Understand that families are of primary importance in children's development and well-being and that children are best understood in the context of their families, cultures and communities.
4. Understand the importance of creating and maintaining positive relationships with families and colleagues to support children's well-being.

C. Practice

RECEs:

1. Are attuned and responsive to the holistic needs of children.
2. Engage in supportive and respectful interactions with children to ensure they feel a sense of security and belonging.
3. Access available information regarding the relevant family circumstances of children and the factors that may contribute to shaping their individual and family identity (including, but not limited to, the child's health, legal custody and/or guardianship, family structure and cultural and linguistic background).
4. Support children in developing coping skills, regulating their behaviour and interacting positively with others. They recognize all children's capacity to self-regulate and their right to be supported to develop these skills.
5. Communicate with children and families by being equitable, inclusive and respectful of diversity. They are receptive listeners and offer encouragement and support by responding appropriately to the ideas, concerns and needs of children and families.
6. Support, encourage and work collaboratively with colleagues. They work to build effective relationships with colleagues by using a variety of communication methods and strategies, applying interpersonal skills, respecting privacy and confidentiality and establishing appropriate boundaries.
7. Ensure that in their relationship with families and colleagues, the needs and best interests of the child are their highest priority. They collaborate with families to access information and resources to make informed decisions about their child. They advocate for children and families in partnership with families and colleagues.

(College of Early Childhood Educators, 2017, p. 8-9)

Standard II: Curriculum and Pedagogy

A. Principle

Registered early childhood educators (RECEs) co-construct knowledge with children, families and colleagues. They draw from their professional knowledge of child development, learning theories and pedagogical and curriculum approaches to plan, implement, document and assess child-centered, inquiry and play-based learning experiences for children.

B. Knowledge

RECEs:

1. Are knowledgeable about child development theories and understand that children's development is integrated across multiple domains and within a variety of contexts and environments.
2. Are knowledgeable about current learning theories and pedagogical and curriculum approaches that are based on inclusion and inquiry and play-based learning.
3. Are knowledgeable about methods in observation, pedagogical documentation, planning, implementation and assessment in order to support children's individual and group learning experiences.
4. Understand that children are capable and enthusiastic learners with unique personalities, skills, and interests.

C. Practice

RECEs:

1. Observe children to identify individual and group needs and interests.
2. Collaborate with children to co-plan and implement a child-centred and play-based curriculum.
3. Use a variety of materials to intentionally create or adapt indoor and outdoor learning environments that support children's exploration and learning.
4. Respond to the uniqueness of individuals and groups of children. They identify appropriate strategies, access the necessary resources and design curriculum to ensure full participation of all children, taking into account ability, cultural and linguistic diversity and Indigenous identity. They provide all children with opportunities for engagement, exploration and expression.
5. Use technology and assistive technological tools as appropriate to support children's learning and development.
6. Document children's learning experiences in order to reflect upon and assess children's growth and the curriculum. They use documentation and critical reflection to enhance the program and consider new ideas and approaches.
7. Use appropriate and effective communication methods and strategies to share information with families regarding the development and learning of children.
8. Design the daily program to allow for appropriate amounts of uninterrupted inquiry and play-based learning in indoor and outdoor environments.
9. Work collaboratively with families and colleagues to plan meaningful learning experiences and support problem solving and decision making.

(College of Early Childhood Educators, 2017, p. 10-11)

Standard III: Safety, Health, and Well-Being in the Learning Environment

A. Principle

Registered early childhood educators (RECEs) intentionally create and maintain environments that support children's play and learning as well as contribute to a sense of belonging and overall well-being. They ensure that the environment is safe and accessible for all children and families. They also ensure that the environment reflects the values and diversity of the community.

B. Knowledge

RECEs:

1. Are knowledgeable about the research and theories related to the role and impact of the indoor and outdoor learning environments in curriculum design and pedagogy.
2. Are familiar with a variety of strategies to promote and support children's well-being and safety in the learning environment including, but not limited to, nutrition and physical, mental and emotional health.
3. Are knowledgeable about a variety of methods to monitor and evaluate the quality of learning environments.
4. Know and understand safety, health and accessibility legislation.

C. Practice

RECEs:

1. Work in partnership with children, families and colleagues to create a safe, healthy and inviting environment that promotes a sense of belonging, well-being and inclusion.
2. Take appropriate steps to ensure that the environment complies with safety, health and accessibility legislation. They observe and monitor the learning environment and take responsibility to avoid exposing children to harmful or unsafe situations.
3. Obtain and familiarize themselves with available information concerning children's relevant medical conditions, special needs, disabilities, allergies, medication requirements and emergency contact information. This information is obtained when a child comes under the RECE's professional supervision or as soon after that time as the information becomes available and is reviewed on an ongoing basis.
4. Access the necessary resources and design the environment to ensure safety and inclusion for all children in the environment. They work with colleagues to embed early intervention strategies into the program and environment.
5. Provide safe and appropriate supervision of children based on age, development and environment.
6. Design or modify indoor and outdoor learning environments to support children's self-regulation, independence, reasonable risk-taking, meaningful exploration and positive interactions.
7. Promote physical and mental health and well-being by encouraging good nutrition, physical activity and providing daily opportunities for children to connect and interact with the natural world and the outdoors.
8. Consider how the environments affect children through daily care routines and transitions including meal times and snacks, personal care, sleep or rest time. They implement strategies to ensure sufficient time for safe and supportive transitions while maintaining supervision at all times.
9. Use current evidence-informed methods to monitor, evaluate and improve the quality of the learning environment.

(College of Early Childhood Educators, 2017, p. 12-13)

Standard IV: Professionalism and Leadership

A. Principle

Registered early childhood educators (RECEs) demonstrate professionalism in their relationships with children, families, colleagues, and the communities in which they practise. They are reflective and intentional professionals who engage in continuous professional learning. RECEs collaborate with others to ensure high quality early childhood education. All registered early childhood educators, regardless of position or title, are leaders.

B. Knowledge

RECEs:

1. Are knowledgeable about current legislation, policies and procedures that are relevant to their professional practice and to the care and education of children.
2. Are knowledgeable about current research, evidence-informed practice and trends in the early years sector.
3. Understand the value of reflective practice and leadership development and how continuous professional learning supports their professional growth and contributes to improving the quality of early childhood education for children, families and communities.
4. Are familiar with the variety of early years programs, services and resources that support or impact children, families and the profession. They understand the roles of different stakeholders in the provision of programs and services.
5. Understand the purpose and mandate of the College of Early Childhood Educators and other relevant professional organizations.
6. Understand their legal obligations to practise according to the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*. RECEs understand that if there is a conflict between the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice* and their work environment or the policies and procedures of their employer, they have an obligation to comply with the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*.

C. Practice

RECEs:

1. Review and access current research and transfer this knowledge into evidence-informed practice. They engage in critical reflection, collaborative inquiry and demonstrate their commitment to ongoing learning by engaging in the Continuous Professional Learning program.
2. Effectively communicate the foundations of their practice and their decision-making processes to families and colleagues.
3. Collaborate with families and colleagues, including community partners and members of other professions, to access resources and expertise. They facilitate community partnerships for the benefit of children and families.
4. Model professional values, beliefs and behaviours with children, families and colleagues. They understand that their conduct reflects on them as professionals and on their profession at all times.
5. Advocate in the interest of children, families, early childhood educators and the early years sector.
6. Support and collaborate with colleagues, including early childhood education students and those who are new to the profession.
7. Engage with their professional community through activities such as participation in research, associations, committees, or professional networks, or by acting as a role model or mentor.

8. Provide guidance and direction to supervisees that is respectful and fair. RECEs ensure a level of supervision that is appropriate in light of the supervisee's education, training, experience and the activities being performed. They create opportunities for supervisees to assume formal or informal leadership roles.
9. Co-operate fully with the College and conduct themselves in a manner that demonstrates respect for the College and its mandate. This duty to co-operate applies to all requests from the College, including but not limited to investigations of a complaint or mandatory employer reports.
10. Use the title "registered early childhood educator" or "*éducatrice de la petite enfance inscrite*" or "*éducateur de la petite enfance inscrit*" in connection with their practice. A member is also required to use the professional designation RECE or EPEI in documentation used in connection with their practice.
11. Report professional misconduct, incompetence and incapacity of colleagues which could create a risk to the health or well-being of children or others to the appropriate authorities. This includes reporting to the College if the conduct is that of an RECE.
12. Practise within the parameters of their professional knowledge and competence. Prior to engaging in new or specialized areas of practice, or returning after a substantial time away from an area of practice, RECEs assess their knowledge and competence and seek appropriate training, ongoing professional learning or other support.

(College of Early Childhood Educators, 2017, p. 14-15)

Standard V: Professional Boundaries, Dual Relationships, and Conflict of Interest

A. Principle

Registered early childhood educators (RECEs), by virtue of their professional role and responsibilities, hold positions of trust and responsibility with regard to children under their professional supervision. RECEs understand the importance of maintaining professional boundaries with children, families and colleagues. They are aware of dual relationships and identify and declare conflicts of interest when they arise and take action to prevent harm to children or their families.

B. Knowledge

Professional Boundaries

RECEs:

1. Understand that they are responsible for maintaining and managing professional boundaries with children, families and colleagues.

2. Understand that blurring of boundaries between professional and personal relationships may influence their professional judgement.

3. Understand the inherent imbalance of power in relationships between a professional and a child or family, and know and understand that care must to be taken to ensure that children and families are protected from potential abuse of an RECE's position of power during, after, or related to the provision of their professional services.

4. Understand that boundary violations with children, families or colleagues include sexual misconduct and non-sexual boundary violations. They understand non-sexual boundary violations can be emotional, physical, social or financial.

Dual Relationships

RECEs:

5. Understand that dual relationships occur whenever RECEs, in addition to their professional relationship, have one or more other relationships with a child under their professional supervision, the child's family, a colleague or a supervisee. RECEs understand that these other relationships may occur prior to, during, or following the professional relationship.

6. Understand that dual relationships may lead to, among other things, violation of professional boundaries or conflicts of interest.

Conflicts of Interest
RECEs:
7. Understand what constitutes a conflict of interest. These situations include, but are not limited to, instances when RECEs have a personal, financial or other professional interest or obligation that gives rise to a reasonable concern that the interest or obligation may influence how they carry out their professional responsibilities.

C. Practice
Professional Boundaries
RECEs:
1. Establish and maintain clear and appropriate boundaries in professional relationships with children under their professional supervision, their families and colleagues.
2. Do not use their professional position to coerce, improperly influence, harass, abuse or exploit a child who is under their professional supervision, the child's family or a supervisee.
3. Ensure that the amount and nature of the information they share with and receive from families and colleagues is appropriate and relevant to the professional context and services being provided and is not used to acquire, either directly or indirectly, advantage or material benefits.
4. Ensure that communications with children, families and colleagues are professional and that use of technology and social media is consistent with professional boundaries.
Dual Relationships
RECEs:
5. Evaluate to what extent a dual relationship might impair professional judgment or lead to risk of harm to a child.
6. Acknowledge and communicate to affected parties, as appropriate, the nature of the dual relationship and the steps taken to address related risks.
7. Avoid dual relationships with children, families, and colleagues that could impair their professional judgment or lead to a risk of harm to children.

Conflicts of Interest
RECEs:
8. Identify and evaluate potential conflicts of interest.
9. Acknowledge and disclose the nature of the conflict of interest.
10. Take appropriate steps to address the conflict of interest, obtain consent by individuals involved, and document actions taken to address related risks.
11. Avoid conflicts of interest with children, families, and colleagues that could impair their professional judgment or lead to a risk of harm to children.

(College of Early Childhood Educators, 2017, p. 16-18)

Standard VI: Confidentiality, Release of Information and Duty to Report

A. Principle

Registered early childhood educators (RECEs) respect the confidentiality of information related to children and families and obey all laws pertaining to privacy and the sharing of information. RECEs disclose such information only when required or allowed by law to do so or when the necessary consent has been obtained for the disclosure of the information. They understand that as a result of their professional knowledge and role, they are in a unique position to recognize possible signs of child abuse, neglect and family violence, and have a particular duty to report their suspicions.

B. Knowledge

RECEs:

1. Are knowledgeable about applicable privacy legislation and obligations related to different types of personal and confidential information.
2. Maintain an understanding relating to the management of information including, but not limited to, how information is collected, used, disclosed, retained and disposed.
3. Understand that families may obtain access to or request correction of a record of information about their child.
4. Are knowledgeable about legislation, policies and procedures related to the *Child and Family Services Act**. They understand that they are recognized by the *Child and Family Services Act* as being in a unique position to recognize the signs of child abuse, neglect and family violence, and have a particular duty to report their suspicions.

5. Understand that the *Child and Family Services Act* provisions about reporting suspected abuse or neglect take precedence over an organization's policies and procedures.

C. Practice

Confidentiality

RECEs:

1. Comply with any applicable privacy legislation. They obtain consent to the collection, use or disclosure of information concerning children or families, unless otherwise permitted or required by law.
2. Inform families early in their relationship about the limits of confidentiality of information, including sharing relevant information with colleagues.
3. Obtain consent or ensure consent has been obtained from families before electronically recording, photographing, audio or videotaping or permitting third party observation of children's activities. RECEs also obtain consent before using any image or information about a child or family in a print or an electronic format, including, but not limited to, social media.

Release of Information Regarding Children and Families

RECEs:

4. Obtain consent from families before sharing of information unless disclosure without consent is permitted or required by law.
5. Provide families, on request, with access to records maintained by RECEs in respect to their child or such parts of those records as are relevant, unless there is reasonable cause for refusing to do so.
6. When in a review, investigation or proceeding under the ECE Act in which the professional conduct, competency or capacity of a College member is an issue, the member may disclose such

information concerning or received from a child or the child's family as is reasonably required by the member or the College for the purposes of the review, investigation or proceeding, without the consent of the individuals to whom the information relates.

7. When disclosure is required or allowed by law or by order of court, RECEs do not divulge more information than is required or allowed.

Duty to Report

RECEs:

8. Comply with the *Child and Family Services Act* about their duty to report suspected child abuse and neglect to the Children's Aid Society.

(College of Early Childhood Educators, 2017, p. 19-20)