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Integrating a Trauma-Informed Approach Throughout the School Board

Emily Burns
eburns32@uwo.ca

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Abstract

The organization at the centre of this Improvement Plan is a school board in Ontario. The problem of practice (POP) being addressed is the inadequate integration of trauma-sensitive practices in educator pedagogies and in school policies and procedures. Currently, there is a lack of awareness and understanding of the potential impacts of trauma and toxic stress on student learning and development among educators and decision-makers throughout the school board. Without a thorough understanding of these potential impacts, it is challenging for educators to know how to best support trauma-affected students and help them experience success in their academics. Within her role as a psychoeducational clinician, the author will demonstrate a Trauma-Informed Inclusive Leadership Framework to drive the change process. This framework is inspired by the structure of the Ontario Leadership Framework (OLF) (Leithwood, 2012; The Institute for Education Leadership, 2013); and is influenced by critical and social justice lenses and the core principles of trauma-informed care (Phifer & Hull, 2016; Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration, 2014). The Trauma-Informed Inclusive Leadership Framework encourages authentic leadership behaviours from many different school board members, including: administrators, parents, teachers, support staff and students (Hollander, 2009, pp. 3-8; Hitt & Tucker, 2016; Leithwood, 2012; Leithwood & Azah, 2014; The Institute for Education Leadership, 2013). This style of leadership is reciprocal rather than exclusively hierarchical and is exercised through relationships between and among individuals and groups, which aligns well with the school board’s Engagement Model (Organization X, 2019).

The strategy for change is to create a multi-tiered flexible framework for providing education, resources and supports to educators and students so that they can become trauma-informed and implement trauma-sensitive strategies in their school settings (Phifer & Hull, 2016;
Reinbergs & Fefer, 2018). As educators learn how a number of the strategies they intuitively demonstrate are already having a positive impact on trauma-affected students and begin to integrate new trauma-sensitive practices into their pedagogies, trusting relationships will continue to form and be reinforced between them and their students. This will positively impact student outcomes, as well as educator job satisfaction (Carello & Butler, 2015; Perry & Daniels, 2016; Phifer & Hull, 2016; Walkley & Cox, 2013). Over time, a sustainable trauma-informed approach to education will be cultivated throughout the school board, helping the school board to achieve its mission of fostering the success of every student, every day (Organization X, 2019).

Key words: Attitudes Related to Trauma-Informed Care (ARTIC) Questionnaire, Critical Lens, Inclusive Leadership, Multi-tiered Approach to Trauma Supports in Schools, Ontario Leadership Framework (OLF), Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP), Problem of Practice (POP), Professional Development, Psychoeducational Clinician, School Board, Social Justice Lens, Stressor, Superintendent of Education, Toxic Stress, Trauma, Trauma-Informed Care and Trauma-Informed Inclusive Leadership Framework.
Executive Summary

The organization at the centre of this Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP) is a school board in Ontario, whose role is to provide children and youth with a comprehensive education and to prepare them to become valued, contributing members of their communities. The school board serves more than twenty-one thousand students across sixty-three elementary and secondary schools (Organization X, 2019). School buildings are located in rural settings, small towns and small cities. Staff and students come from a diverse variety of cultural backgrounds, including members from four local Indigenous communities (Organization X, 2019). The vision of the school board is “our students- shaping our world” (Organization X, 2019). Its mission is to foster the success of every student every day.

The problem of practice (POP) being addressed in this OIP is the inadequate integration of trauma-informed practices in educator pedagogies and in school policies and procedures. Currently, there is a lack of awareness and understanding of the potential impacts of trauma and toxic stress on student learning and development among educators and decision-makers throughout the school board. Without a thorough understanding of these potential impacts, it is challenging for educators to know how to best support trauma-affected students to reach their potential and be successful in their academics. Trauma, for the purposes of this change process, is defined as an extraordinary experience that overwhelms a student’s ability to cope (Souers & Hall, 2016). Toxic stress is a severe, extended or repetitive experience of adversity without a supportive caregiver that results in a prolonged or permanent abnormal physiological response to stressors (Franke, 2014). Examples of trauma and toxic stress may include such things as war, natural disaster, sexual assault, motor vehicle accident, divorce, poverty, serious illness, loss of a
loved one, bullying, etc. (American Psychiatric Association, 2013, pp. 265-290; Souers & Hall, 2016).

Students with a history of trauma or toxic stress are more likely to experience higher rates of truancy, increased discipline referrals, more frequent suspensions and expulsions, decreased academic performance, and increased mental health challenges compared to students with no history of trauma (Blodgett & Lanigan, 2018; McInerney & McKlindon, 2014; Shonk & Cicchetti, 2001; Walkley & Cox, 2013; West, Day, Somers & Baroni, 2014). Educators interacting directly with students impacted by trauma also face an increased risk of burnout, compassion fatigue and exposure to vicarious trauma, which can result in chronic absenteeism and educators choosing to leave the teaching profession (Koenig, Rodger & Specht, 2017; Lucas, 2007; Souers & Hall, 2016, pp. 44).

Currently the school board devotes a great amount of financial and human resources to support students who demonstrate challenging behaviours, weak academic performance and poor self-regulation skills, often without understanding the root cause of many of these challenges: the students’ experience of trauma. With the appropriate knowledge and supports, parents, counsellors, teachers, coaches and other school community members are all in a position to support the healing and development of children and youth who have experienced trauma (Bath, 2008; Kataoka, Vona, Acuna, Jaycox, Escudero, Rojas, Ramirez, Lamgley & Stein, 2018).

As a psychoeducational clinician within the school board, the author engages in emergent leadership practices, as she is not in a formal leadership or managerial position. She influences others to recognize that the POP does in fact exist and persuades them of the need for organizational change through her interactions and relationships with colleagues and those in formal leadership positions and by demonstrating her skillset in her area of clinical expertise.
Inspiration for the author’s leadership framework is taken from the structure of the Ontario Leadership Framework (OLF) (Leithwood, 2012; The Institute for Education Leadership, 2013), and is also influenced by critical and social justice lenses and the core principles of trauma-informed care (Phifer & Hull, 2016; SAMHSA, 2014). Similar to the OLF, the author’s Trauma-Informed Inclusive Leadership Framework promotes leadership behaviours from many sources, including: administrators, parents, teachers, support staff and students (Hitt & Tucker, 2016; Hollander, 2009, pp. 3-8; Leithwood, 2012; Leithwood & Azah, 2014; The Institute for Education Leadership, 2013). Leadership is reciprocal rather than exclusively hierarchical and is exercised through relationships between and among individuals and groups. Reciprocal leadership means that there is some given and take from both the leader(s) and followers in decision-making. This style of leadership aligns well with the school board’s Engagement Model as it promotes citizenship, communication, critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration among organizational members (Organization X, 2019). The author’s Trauma-Informed Inclusive Leadership Framework allows her to focus on the individual and collective growth of school board staff, students and community members (Bass & Avolio, 1993; Northouse, 2016, pp. 162-193; Ryan, 2006; Ryan, 2014). Throughout the change process the author will work collaboratively with her multi-disciplinary team to motivate all stakeholders to see her vision for change as both personally compelling and also connected to the school board’s broader vision and mission (Hitt & Tucker, 2016).

In order to purposefully integrate trauma-informed practices across all levels of the school board hierarchy, it will be important for the author to consider these ten factors recommended by Chafouleas, Johnson, Overstreet and Santos (2016): governance and leadership; policy; physical environment; engagement and involvement; cross-sector
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collaboration; screening, assessment and treatment services; training and workplace
development; progress monitoring and quality assurance; financing; and evaluation. A flexible
framework for action planning in which the individual school context strongly influences
decision-making is essential to the success of the change initiative (Chafouleas et al., 2016;
Plumb, Bush and Kersevich, 2016). Chafouleas et al. (2016) emphasize the importance of
recognizing and articulating to others involved in the change initiative how integrating trauma-
informed practices in their settings is well aligned with their individual school goals, as well as
board-wide goals. They also recommend focusing on measurable outcomes with decisions being
based on data and on local context characteristics. Therefore, the six key components of trauma-
informed schools described by Phifer and Hull (2016) and supported in the literature (Báez et al.,
2019; Perry & Daniels, 2016; Reinbergs & Fefer, 2018; SAMHSA, 2014) may look different
when applied in different schools.

The focus of the change process will be to create a multi-tiered approach to the
integration of trauma-informed practices in each school. This multi-tiered approach will first
focus on preventative measures (e.g. teacher education, environment audits, social-emotional
learning opportunities for students, etc.), followed by targeted small group supports (in
collaboration with members from the special education team including psychoeducational
clinicians and student support teachers and educational assistants), and the development of
community partnerships with relevant child and youth support agencies. These partnerships will
help to improve the ease of connection to community services for those students who would
benefit from individualized, more intensive interventions (while still collaborating with the
students’ school team and family) (Phifer & Hull, 2016; Reinbergs & Fefer, 2018). See Table 1
in Appendix A for a breakdown of the change implementation plan, required resources, budget and stakeholders.

Jacob Ham, a clinical psychologist and trauma guru described a trauma-sensitive school as akin to a group of mama elephants watching over their baby elephants and protecting them in order that they might enjoy the freedom that comes with feeling safe as they learn and play (Ham, 2017). It is the author’s hope that through the implementation of this change plan, the school board will empower its educators to act as the mama elephants do, creating safe spaces and caring relationships in which students grow and thrive. As educators begin to recognize how a number of the strategies they intuitively demonstrate are already having a positive impact on trauma-affected students and start to integrate new trauma-informed practices into their pedagogies, positive relationships will continue to form and be reinforced between them and their students. This will positively impact student outcomes, as well as educator job satisfaction (Carello & Butler, 2015; Perry & Daniels, 2016; Phifer & Hull, 2016; Walkley & Cox, 2013). A trauma-informed approach to education will hopefully become best practice in all school settings as it will be intrinsically reinforcing for both educators and students. The change plan promoted through the author’s Trauma-Informed Inclusive Leadership Framework will allow for the realization of a sustainable, trauma-informed approach to education throughout the school board, bringing the school board that much closer to achieving its mission of fostering the success of every student, every day (Organization X, 2019).
Acknowledgements

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# Glossary of Terms

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<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attitudes Related to Trauma-Informed Care (ARTIC) Questionnaire</strong></td>
<td>A psychometrically validated quantitative measure of organizational members’ attitudes related to trauma-informed care (Baker et al., 2016; Traumatic Stress Institute, 2019).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Critical Lens</strong></td>
<td>A viewpoint that emphasizes that changing an organization for the better involves both analysis and critique of current social structures so as to establish a liberating influence (Davies, Popescu &amp; Gunter, 2011; Faubert, 2017b).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inclusive Leadership</strong></td>
<td>A leadership style that relies on relationships, reciprocal communication and trust influenced by respect, recognition, responsiveness and responsibility demonstrated by both the leader(s) and follower(s). These relationships allow the group to accomplish goals for mutual benefit without relying on one person’s capabilities alone (Hollander, 2009).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Multi-tiered Approach to Trauma Support in Schools</strong></td>
<td>A framework designed to meet the needs of students requiring varying levels of support from preventative to intensive interventions (Phifer &amp; Hull, 2016).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ontario Leadership Framework (OLF)</strong></td>
<td>A kindergarten through grade twelve leadership tool for school improvement planning (Leithwood, 2012; The Institute for Education Leadership, 2013).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP)</strong></td>
<td>A scholarly persuasive paper that outlines evidence-based systematic strategies to address organizational problems of practice in order to promote the public and or social good (“Problems of Practice,” 2016).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Problem of Practice (POP)</strong></td>
<td>A persistent challenge that exists within an organization that prevents it from realizing its mission, vision and values (“Problems of Practice,” 2016).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Professional Development</strong></td>
<td>Educational opportunities provided to organizational members for the purpose of improving and learning job-related skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Psychoeducational Clinician</strong></td>
<td>A school board employee with a Master’s level training in psychology who provides consultation, counselling, assessment and in-service supports at schools throughout the school board under the supervision of the Manager of Psychology Services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School Board</strong></td>
<td>A local collective authority that is responsible for the establishment and maintenance of schools under the direction of the Ontario Ministry of Education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Justice Lens</strong></td>
<td>A viewpoint that requires organizational members to recognize inequities within the organization and devise actionable steps towards reform that will help to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Definition</td>
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<tr>
<td>INTEGRATING A TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACH</td>
<td>diminish and eliminate these inequalities (Ryan, 2006; Ryan, 2014; Wang, 2018).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stressor</td>
<td>A physical, emotional or environmental event or experience that initiates the body’s stress response (Franke, 2014).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superintendent of Education</td>
<td>A school board administrator who is responsible for a number of schools within the school board.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toxic Stress</td>
<td>A severe, extended or repetitive experience of adversity without a supportive caregiver resulting in a prolonged or permanent abnormal physiological response to stressors (Franke, 2014).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trauma</td>
<td>An extraordinary experience that overwhelms a student’s ability to cope (Souers &amp; Hall, 2016). This may include such things as war, natural disaster, sexual assault, motor vehicle accident, divorce, poverty, serious illness, loss of a loved one, bullying, etc. (American Psychiatric Association, 2013, pp. 265-290; Souers &amp; Hall, 2016).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trauma-informed Care</td>
<td>Considers others’ experience of trauma in all aspects of service delivery and takes steps to ensure the safety, autonomy and support of trauma survivors (Chafouleas et al., 2016; Cummings et al., 2017; Phifer &amp; Hull, 2016; Souers &amp; Hall, 2016; Zakszeski, Ventresco &amp; Jaffe, 2017).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trauma-Informed Inclusive Leadership Framework</td>
<td>A leadership tool for change developed by the author and inspired by the OLF (Leithwood, 2012; The Institute for Education Leadership, 2013), the literature on inclusive leadership practices (Hollander, 2009; Mitchell et al., 2015; Ryan, 2006; Ryan, 2014), and the core principles of trauma-informed care (Báez et al., 2019; Phifer &amp; Hull, 2016; SAMHSA, 2014) and influenced by critical and social justice lenses.</td>
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Integrating a Trauma-informed Approach throughout the School Board

Chapter 1

Introduction and Problem

The organization at the centre of this Improvement Plan is a school board in Ontario. The problem of practice (POP) being addressed is the inadequate integration of trauma-informed practices in educator pedagogies and in school policies and procedures. Currently, there is a lack of awareness and understanding of the potential impacts of trauma and toxic stress on student learning and development among educators and decision-makers throughout the school board. Without a thorough understanding of these potential impacts, it is challenging for educators to know how to best support trauma-affected students to reach their potential and be successful in their academics. In this section the author will discuss the school board’s history, as well as its social, cultural, political and economic contexts and its readiness for change. The author will also further describe the identified POP through a critical and social justice lens, frame it using Bolman and Deal’s multiple frame framework (2013) and provide insight into her own leadership position and vision for change.

Organizational Context

Organizational History

The organization is a school board in Ontario whose role is to provide children and youth with a comprehensive education and to prepare them to become valued, contributing members of their communities. The school board consists of fifty-one elementary schools and twelve high schools (Organization X, 2019). Staff work collaboratively to foster the success of the approximately twenty-one thousand students registered with the school board (Organization X, 2019). School buildings are located in rural settings, small towns and small cities. Staff and
students come from a diverse variety of cultural backgrounds, including members from four local Indigenous communities (Organization X, 2019). The mission of the school board is “our students- shaping our world” (Organization X, 2019). Its vision is to foster the success of every student every day.

Cultural Context

![OCAI hypothetical current and preferred cultures](adapted from Cameron & Quinn, 2011, pp. 27-34).

The Clan culture type values collaboration and teamwork and demonstrates a management style that promotes the empowerment of organizational members, encouraging members to voice their opinions and participate in decision-making (Cameron & Quinn, 2011, pp. 46-48). School board leaders have organized multi-disciplinary teams in each school that meet regularly to problem-solve and create solutions to challenges within their settings. The head of the Special Education Department also meets regularly with the individual specialty teams (e.g. Psychology, Speech and Language, etc.) and encourages input from all members to find creative ways to promote the school board’s mission and vision.

The Hierarchy culture type is characterized by formalized roles and structured work activities (Cameron & Quinn, 2011, pp. 42-43). The school board has a number of procedures and protocols that govern organizational member behaviour. Special education coordinators work with school administrators and those on specialty teams to coordinate student supports and
keep school activities functioning well. The predictability and stability that adhering to these established procedures generates allows student supports to be delivered effectively and efficiently.

The Market culture type is results oriented and views the external environment as one in which it must compete in order to be productive and demonstrate results (Cameron & Quinn, 2011, pp. 43-46). Individual schools compete both within and outside of the school district for higher test scores on ministry driven standardized measures in order to attain recognition for strong academic performance and access to opportunities for program advancements. Teachers work diligently with students to support their academic development both for the students’ satisfaction and the desired reputation of an academically elite school.

Finally, the Adhocracy culture type is characterized as dynamic and creative, where organizational members take risks and leaders promote and demonstrate innovation within the organization (Cameron & Quinn, 2011, pp. 49-51). Educators within the school board frequently demonstrate creativity in their programming and in their problem-solving as they meet novel challenges head-on. The school board is currently shrinking in terms of the student population it serves based on community trends; however, it is always seeking to be on the cutting edge of new information and technology to advance student development.

While the current hypothetical culture of the school board is fairly well aligned with the school board’s articulated mission and vision, the experiences organizational members have had in supporting students who are impacted by trauma have been difficult. These experiences have likely influenced members’ perceptions about of their capabilities within their roles, resulting in low organizational self-esteem (Pierce & Gardner, 2004). Many educators intuitively demonstrate caring and supportive behaviours that positively impact trauma-affected students
without recognizing their impact due to their lack of trauma knowledge. They may only see the challenges they and their trauma-affected students face, which negatively influence their perceptions of their capabilities for helping trauma-affected students to heal. Organizational structure, messages of worth from the organizational leaders and success-building role conditions (e.g. performance support, security, role clarity, etc.) influence organizational self-esteem (Bowling, Eschleman, Wang, Kirkendall & Alarcon, 2010; Pierce & Gardner 2004). Pierce and Gardner (2004) found that organizational self-esteem is linked to job satisfaction, organizational commitment, motivation, citizenship behaviour, job performance and employee retention. They emphasize the importance of developing and implementing organizational policies, programs and procedures that support the healthy development of organizational self-esteem. The change plan will focus on providing education and appropriate supports to educators working with trauma-affected students so as to improve educator confidence and organizational self-esteem.

The hypothetical preferred culture also includes characteristics from all four culture categories, with the clan and hierarchy culture types being most influential. Inviting other organizational members, including students, to complete the OCAI now and preferred would provide greater insight into the necessary degree of change in the school board’s culture to affect the desired outcomes. Approval and resources from the Superintendent of Education would be required to move forward with this. Improving organizational self-esteem and adapting the school board’s culture are likely key to successfully integrating trauma-informed practices throughout the school board (Creswell, 2007, pp. 15-31; Greenfield, 1973).

Inclusive leadership practices align well with the school board’s hypothetical preferred culture, its Engagement Model (Organization X, 2019) and the author’s own leadership values and behaviours. This style of leadership will help to influence the desired cultural changes and
build organizational self-esteem (Cottrill, Lopez & Hoffman, 2014). As school board members become more adept at demonstrating inclusive leadership behaviours and viewing school practices through critical and social justice lenses, they will be more able to recognize the injustices within their schools and act together to address them (Ryan, 2006; Ryan, 2014). Inclusive leadership involves advocating for inclusive practices by educating organizational members and supporting them to develop a critical conscience through open dialogues that emphasizes student learning and classroom practice (Ryan, 2006, pp. 9). Inclusive leadership helps to facilitate members’ sense of belonging in work teams, while maintaining their individuality as they contribute unique insights and solutions to their teams (Mitchell, Boyle, Parker, Giles, Chiang & Joyce, 2015). Applying an inclusive approach to decision-making and policy-making will help to create the shift towards a more clan-like culture, while still maintaining the school board’s traditional hierarchical structure, so as to ensure its consistency and efficiencies are maintained.

**Social Context**

The school board’s leaders recognize the importance of member and student development, engagement and morale, as reflected by their application of the Engagement Model (Organization X, 2019).

*Figure 2.* The school board’s Engagement Model (adapted from Organization X, 2019).
Under this model, intellectual, social and organizational engagement are cultivated in staff and students, in order to promote the development of students’ character, citizenship, communication, critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration skills. Students are viewed as partners with the school board as they play an essential role in their individual educational experiences. The school board encourages member involvement in professional development activities and provides resources to support staff members working with students who are impacted by trauma. It also encourages student involvement in planning and decision-making through surveys and committee meetings with school board administrators. The school board operates following a number of established procedures, with decisions flowing from the top down. These customary methods of operation help to maintain stability within the school board, while gradually moving it towards attaining its mission and vision.

Formal leadership positions are typically earned based on skills and experience. The Three-Skill approach to leadership (Katz, 2009; Northouse, 2016, pp.43-70) is reflected in the school board’s tactics for cultivating leaders within the organization. Those selected for leadership opportunities have typically earned their positions based on their demonstrated effectiveness within their individual roles. The school board recognizes potential candidates for leadership opportunities and supports them to develop their technical, human and conceptual skills in order to create leadership teams that have complementary skill sets. Many of those in formal leadership positions within the school board began their careers as teachers or support staff and gradually, with the support of others already in leadership positions, grew their skill sets, resulting in opportunities for advancement.
Economic Context

The Ontario Ministry of Education provides funding to the school board, which allows it to recruit and retain expert staff and essential support resources (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2018b). This funding is limited and it is distributed throughout the school board largely at the discretion of the Ministry. Funding can change based on a number of factors outside of the school board’s control, making it difficult to engage in long-term planning. For example, the recent change in provincial government from a Liberal leadership to a Conservative leadership has already brought about changes in curriculum policy and funding for schools (Alphonso, 2018).

Individual schools also engage in fundraising activities to support their programming. These funds tend to stay within the individual schools and are spent at the discretion of the school administrator. Unfortunately, schools located in lower socioeconomic communities have more difficulty promoting successful fundraising campaigns, and as a result have less economic resources to support their programming. A critical and social justice lens would point out that these schools in lower socioeconomic communities are at unfair disadvantage. An inclusive leadership approach would involve bringing many voices to the table to see if these funds could be distributed so that students throughout the school board could benefit more equitably.

Political Context

A blend of neoliberal and conservative values exists within the school board, particularly at the administrative level. Educators, students and community partners are often invited to share their concerns and ideas at public forums facilitated by the school board and are given the impression that their contributions will impact decision-making. However, the school board is organized in a traditional hierarchical structure, and often decisions have already been made by
senior leadership within the school board or by leaders within the Ontario Ministry of Education (Faubert, 2017a; Faubert, 2017c; Garrett, 2010). Decisions are largely impacted by financial considerations and changes tend to happen gradually over time.

**Leadership Position and Lens Statement**

As indicated by Creswell (2007, pp. 15-31), this author brings to the school board her own experience, worldview and set of beliefs. The author holds advocacy and participatory values and believes the research conducted to support the Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP) should contain a collaborative action agenda that will influence change within the school board, so as to improve the experience of its members and the community it supports (Creswell, 2007, pp.15-31). These values stem from the critical and social justice lenses through which the author views her POP. Using a critical lens, the author is able to examine the education system in which she works in search of inequities and injustices (Davies, Popescu & Gunter, 2011; Faubert, 2017b). Applying a social justice lens to the POP creates opportunities for the author to look beyond analysis and critique to devise actionable steps towards reform that will help to diminish and eliminate these inequities and injustices (Bogotch & Shields, 2014; Ryan, 2006; Ryan, 2014; Wang, 2018).

As a psychoeducational clinician within the school board, the author engages in emergent leadership practices as she is not in a formal leadership or managerial position. She influences others to recognize that the POP does in fact exist and persuades them of the need for organizational change through her interactions and relationships with colleagues and those in formal leadership positions, and through the demonstration of her skillset in her area of clinical expertise. Inclusive leadership aligns well with the author’s leadership values and behaviours as it emphasizes just how valuable relationships can be to accomplishing goals for the mutual
benefit of all team members (Hollander, 2009). The author values collaborative and candid leadership practices. Inclusive leadership involves transparency and open, two-way communication between leaders and educators (Hollander, 2009; Mitchell et al., 2015). Inclusive leadership practices are demonstrated by those in formal leadership positions within the school board as reflected by the school board’s engagement model. The application of the school board’s engagement model by the author’s supervisor, the Manager of Psychology Services, has allowed the author to speak up and lead authentically to effect change because she feels well supported by her supervisor who collaborates with her and encourages her to think critically and creatively while problem-solving and working to support students, educators and families. The author has developed authentic and inclusive leadership skills through her academic and professional experiences and through the relationships she has built with other organizational members (Northouse, 2016, pp. 195-223; Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing & Peterson, 2008). Authenticity emerges through interactions with other organizational members when a leader acts with conviction and is genuine, which this author endeavours to be in her emergent leadership actions. Her critical and social justice approach to leadership also motivates her to support others to develop their own advocacy skills so that they are able to campaign effectively to get their needs met (Davies, Popescu & Gunter, 2011; Faubert, 2017b).

Within her role as a psychoeducational clinician, the author works collaboratively with school teams and students, encouraging them to contribute their unique strengths to the problem-solving process in order to help struggling students become better engaged in their education. The author’s inclusive view of leadership allows her to focus on the individual and collective growth of school board staff, students and community members (Bass & Avolio, 1993; Northouse, 2016, pp. 162-193; Ryan, 2006; Ryan, 2014). The author will share her unique
contributions based on her clinical expertise and work collaboratively with a multi-disciplinary team to motivate all stakeholders to see her vision for change as both personally compelling and also connected to the school board’s broader vision and mission (Hitt & Tucker, 2016).

**Leadership Problem of Practice**

The POP being addressed by this OIP is the inadequate integration of trauma-informed practices in educator pedagogies and in school policies and procedures. Currently, there is a lack of awareness and understanding of the potential impacts of trauma and toxic stress on student learning and development among educators and decision-makers throughout the school board. This is not to say that educators are failing to demonstrate supportive and caring behaviours that help to foster positive connections with trauma-affected students. The challenge is that educators lack knowledge about trauma and its impact, and as a result, feel they have a limited capacity to support trauma-affected students to heal and succeed in their education. Without a thorough understanding of the potential impacts of trauma, it is challenging for educators to know how to best support trauma-affected students to reach their potential and be successful in their academics. Trauma, for the purposes of this change process, is defined as an extraordinary experience that overwhelms a student’s ability to cope (Souers & Hall, 2016). This may include such things as war, natural disaster, sexual assault, motor vehicle accident, divorce, poverty, serious illness, loss of a loved one, bullying, etc. (American Psychiatric Association, 2013, pp. 265-290; Souers & Hall, 2016). Toxic stress is defined as a severe, extended or repetitive experience of adversity without the support of a trusted caregiver resulting in a prolonged or permanent abnormal physiological response to stressors (Franke, 2014).

Students with a history of trauma or toxic stress are more likely to experience higher rates of truancy, increased discipline referrals, more frequent suspensions and expulsions, decreased
academic performance, and increased mental health challenges compared to students with no
title of trauma (Blodgett & Lanigan, 2018; McInerney & McKlindon, 2014; Shonk &
Cicchetti, 2001; Walkley & Cox, 2013; West et al., 2014). Educators interacting directly with
students impacted by trauma also face an increased risk of burnout, compassion fatigue and
exposure to vicarious trauma, potentially contributing to their leaving the teaching profession
(Koenig, Rodger & Specht, 2017; Lucas, 2007; Souers & Hall, 2016, pp. 44).

Currently the school board devotes a great amount of financial and human resources to
support students who demonstrate behavioural difficulties, weak academic performance and poor
self-regulation skills, often without understanding the root cause of many of these challenges: the
students’ experience of trauma. With the appropriate knowledge and supports, parents,
counsellors, teachers, coaches and other school community members are all in a position to
support the healing and development of children and youth who have experienced trauma (Bath,
2008).

**Framing the Problem of Practice**

Nadler and Tushman’s Congruence model links environmental “input” factors with
organizational “output” factors to discuss their influence on each other (Cawsey, Deszca &
Ingols, 2016, pp.68-79; Nadler & Tushman, 1980). According to this model an organization’s
performance is derived from four elements: tasks, people, formal organization (structure) and
informal organization (culture). Congruence between these elements results in improved overall
organizational performance. By analysing the POP using Bolman and Deal’s multiple framework
model (2013), the author is better able to perceive the amount of congruence between the school
board’s tasks, people, structure and culture and develop strategies to improve the school board’s
overall performance.
Bolman and Deal’s framework consists of four frames, the Political frame, the Structural frame, the Human Resource frame and the Symbolic frame. Bolman and Deal (2013, pp. 137-160) state that organizations exist to serve human needs, which aligns well with the mission, vision and values of the school board. The nature of the POP is subjective as the definition of trauma is broad and students’ responses to traumatic events are unique. In order to address the POP, the author must collaborate with school board staff and students in order to best understand their unique experience and needs (Creswell, 2007, pp.15-31).

Bolman and Deal’s Political frame describes how organizational members may view the POP differently based on their individual values and the priorities of their roles (Bolman & Deal, 2013, pp. 185-204). The school board is made up of coalitions of members with different skill sets and priorities, which can come into conflict. The POP will need to be framed differently based on the values and motivating factors of each individual coalition. Negotiating with administrators and community partners to access space and resources may be difficult but is necessary to bring about the desired change. Navigating these difficulties will require astute demonstrations of Bolman and Deal’s identified political skills (i.e. agenda setting, mapping the political terrain, networking and building coalitions and bargaining and negotiating) (Bolman & Deal, 2013, pp. 185-204).

Organizations exist to meet their established goals and objectives (Bolman & Deal, 2013, pp. 69-94). The current structures within the school board are mostly vertical and hierarchical. Structurally, the school board is meeting its established objectives, as teachers are teaching, support staff are supporting, criteria set by the Ontario Ministry of Education are largely being met, and students are progressing through school. However, changes with regards to the flow of information throughout the school board could improve structural inefficiencies. Barriers exist
that preclude school board members from directly influencing leader decision-making, such as limited access to those in formal leadership positions. The school board serves a vast community roughly 5458 km$^2$ in size with educators and students from a number of different small towns and cities. School board leaders typically are based out of one of the school board’s two head offices making it difficult for frontline educators to find opportunities to interact directly with them. These leaders are fairly accessible via email and telephone; however, there is a hierarchy to follow in terms of communicating with leaders. Teachers and support staff are expected to first communicate concerns or ideas with their school administrator, who then shares the information with his or her superiors if he or she deems it necessary. This channel of communication is meant to maintain efficiency of problem-solving within the school board. If a principal can resolve a concern without involving a program coordinator or a Superintendent, this is likely to save time and resources. However, it can be difficult for all school board members to form trusting relationships that foster open communication with leaders without a more personal connection to those with decision-making power.

Educators and administrators are also busy professionals with a large number of priorities, and it can be challenging for them to find time to come together with the school board’s leadership team in order to advocate for their needs to be met. The Ontario Ministry of Education and school board Superintendents and coordinators make decisions about school supports, class sizes, class schedules and the division of limited resources (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2018a) often with little input from more frontline staff and students. Structural changes may be necessary for those in leadership positions to apply inclusive leadership practices more effectively, so that the needs of all school board members can be met and the change process can be successful.
The Human Resource frame assumes that organizations exist to serve human needs (Bolman & Deal, 2013, pp. 137-160). This statement aligns well with the mission, vision and values of the school board. Schools are often used as places to participate in educational and social activities. Staff work collaboratively with students and their families to promote academic success and community involvement. Problems arise when students demonstrate challenging behaviours that interfere with their ability to effectively participate in school activities. Currently school staff are not trauma-informed and are not consistently interacting with students in a trauma-sensitive fashion. The school board must support its members to become trauma-informed so that they can better serve the human needs of their members, staff and students.

The Symbolic frame indicates that what is most important is not necessarily what is being done, but what it means (Bolman & Deal, 2013, pp. 271-284). Due to the lack of trauma knowledge, trauma-affected students are being improperly labeled as troubled or disruptive and are not actively engaged in their educational experience (Gallo, Hill, Hoagwood & Olin, 2016). While the school board’s stated mission, vision and values align well with the principles of trauma-informed care, its members are not living or experiencing these values in the current culture of most school settings.

Analysing the POP using Bolman and Deal’s multiple framework model (2013) has highlighted the discrepancies between the organization’s tasks, people, structure and culture. School board staff, students, families and community partners are currently struggling to function together cohesively. Instances of truancy and discipline referrals, suspensions and expulsions, mental health challenges, poor academic performance and limited communication and collaboration between school board staff, students, families and community partners are signs of this poor fit. Argyris (cited by Bolman and Deal, 2013, pp. 124-129) identified that
when a person-structure conflict exists, individuals are likely to withdraw and resist. School board staff are also showing signs of person-structure conflict as reflected by anecdotal reports from supervisors dealing with staff chronic absenteeism, changing positions and leaving the school board in search of work elsewhere. Absenteeism rates increased almost one day per board employee between 2011 and 2015 with the average number of sick days per employee being 8.46 in 2015 (Kula, 2016).

Factors shaping the POP will be described in this section using a PESTE analysis, which considers political, economic, social, technological and environmental factors within the context of the organization (Cawsey, Deszca & Ingols, 2016. pp. 6).

As a public institution, the school board receives direction from the Ontario Ministry of Education (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2018b). There is mention of the necessity for educators to become trauma-informed in the Capacity Building K-12 journal disseminated by the Ontario Ministry of Education (2016). This article provides information to prepare educators to support students who have arrived in Ontario schools as refugees. However, it does not address how these trauma-sensitive practices may be helpful for all students.

The ministry has also published a curriculum called Supporting Minds (2013) to guide educators in how to promote students’ mental health and wellbeing. This curriculum details information regarding how to support students with specific mental health diagnoses, such as anxiety and depression, and suggests that traumatic experiences may be triggers for some of these mental health concerns. However, the curriculum does not go far enough in that it does not provide direct strategies for proactively preventing the negative impacts of trauma, such as resiliency skill development.
Bethell, Newacheck, Hawes and Halfon (2014) found that building resiliency skills can mitigate the negative effect of adverse childhood experiences and improve school engagement in children. More resources and professional development opportunities are needed to support school board members to become trauma-informed for the benefit of all students (Perry & Daniels, 2016; Phifer & Hull, 2016). The author and a small team of colleagues prepared and shared a proposal with the Superintendent of Education (Special Education Department) and the Manager of Psychology Services to request further training for themselves so that they might create professional development opportunities for their colleagues to access information about the impact of trauma on students and how to best support them. In creating this small multidisciplinary team to develop a proposal for change, the author has demonstrated emergent and inclusive leadership behaviours. She has also influenced the Superintendent of Education and the Manager of Psychology Services to support her and her team’s vision for change based on her positive rapport with these decision-makers, her authentic connection to the concerns outlined in the proposal, and her expertise in supporting trauma-affected students.

Another factor influencing the POP is that many of the school board’s employees are members of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), the Elementary Teachers’ Federation of Ontario (ETFO), or the Ontario Secondary School Teachers’ Federation (OSSTF) (Organization X, 2018). Unions are important in that they advocate for professions and people in their respective professional roles. However, unions create an added layer of priorities to consider and policies to follow when planning an organizational change. For example, PPM 149 is a policy created by the Ministry of Education that is meant to promote collaborative partnerships between schools and community agencies (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2000). Community agencies are allowed to provide services in schools that are not already being
provided by school board employees, as per collective agreements with union member employees (Organization X, 2019). Consequently, community counsellors are not allowed to provide counselling services to students in school buildings during school hours as those services are already provided by the school board’s psychology team, who are members of CUPE and this could result in a grievance. Sometimes a grey area emerges when it is felt that a student’s needs would be best met by a community agency but barriers exist to connecting that student with the agency outside of school (e.g. transportation challenges). It can be challenging to come up with a solution that meets the student’s needs and also adheres to school policies and union agreements. To bring an outside agency in to meet a student’s needs seems like an appropriate course of action in some instances. However, this could result in a policy being broken and the school board being put at risk and having to settle a difficult grievance. While policies such as PPM 149 are meant to support staff and student well-being, discrepancies between government policies, school board policies and collective agreements have the potential to create barriers to achieving a desired organizational change.

Many of the school board’s schools are located in small rural communities, where access to community mental health and trauma supports is limited. There are also few opportunities within these communities for people to access education and training on trauma-sensitive practices. This lack of access to services and supports obliges the school board, a leading organization within the community, to act to fill this gap.

In order to effectively support students impacted by trauma to heal and be ready to learn, educators need to form trusting relationships with the students’ guardians (Cummings, Addante, Swindell, & Meadan, 2017). This can be difficult as the guardians may also be impacted by trauma or toxic stress and may feel unfairly scrutinized by school staff. There is also great
diversity among the school board’s members and students (e.g. Indigenous peoples, refugees, immigrants, LGBTQ, etc.), resulting in a need for education around culturally appropriate trauma-informed supports. This education will help school board staff to foster improved relationships with students and their families.

The Children’s Mental Health Ontario website states that as many as one in five children and youth in Ontario experience some form of mental health problem (Children’s Mental Health Ontario, 2018). Emergency department and hospital visits by children and youth experiencing mental health disturbances have risen by 54 percent and 60 percent respectively over the past ten years. During the 2017-2018 calendar year, Rebound, a community-based support agency for children and youth, provided services to about 1992 children and youth; these included: providing meals and housing, alternative classrooms, access to medical and mental health supports and social-emotional and resiliency skill development group programs (Rebound, 2019). It is difficult to say whether this increase in mental health disturbances, hospital visits and accessing of community supports is directly related to traumatic experiences; however, it is fair to say that the experience of a mental health disturbance or finding oneself homeless or hungry may be a traumatic experience in itself. That said, many of these children and youth are attending educational settings within the school board’s district that are not equipped to meet their needs as they relate to the impact that trauma experiences have had on their development and social-emotional functioning.

Phifer and Hull (2016) state that when school systems approach students through a trauma-informed lens, they are better prepared to provide the educational and social-emotional supports required to support students to achieve their potential. Phifer and Hull (2016) reviewed the implementation efforts of three different trauma-informed school programs and their use of
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multi-tiered interventions to address the needs of students with different levels of trauma exposure and impact. They found that for trauma supports to be most effective, it was necessary to focus on prevention, using system-wide measures to promote safe learning environments in all classrooms.

Guiding Questions Emerging from the Problem of Practice

The guiding questions emerging from the POP include:

- Is there an urgency within the school board to become trauma-informed (Jones, Berg & Osher, 2018)? If so why?
- How does one know that the school board is prepared to develop a trauma-informed action plan to help create trauma-sensitive schools?
- What actions will need to be taken to address staff and student priorities in order to create trauma-sensitive schools?
- How will one know that the schools within the school board are becoming increasingly trauma-sensitive?

The body of literature on the topic of trauma-informed practices in educational settings is growing; however, there is still a need to build a stronger evidence-base regarding effective trauma-sensitive practices as there is limited empirical support for any one framework or model at this point (Chafouleas et al., 2016). Future research should focus on outcomes and process-based data collection as researchers work to build on the current understanding of implementing trauma-informed practices in school settings. A critical and social justice approach to research would help to identify the inequities trauma-impacted students face and what steps can be taken to reduce and eliminate these inequities (Davies, Popescu & Gunter, 2011; Faubert, 2017b; Ryan, 2006; Ryan, 2014). There is evidence to suggest that trauma and toxic stress are linked to
high rates of truancy, increased discipline referrals, more frequent suspensions and expulsions, decreased academic performance and increased mental health challenges (Báez, Renshaw, Bachman, Kim, Smith & Stafford, 2019; Shonk & Cicchetti, 2001; Walkley & Cox, 2013; West et al., 2014). There is also a general consensus among researchers on the core components of effective trauma-informed practices, including: positive relationship building; emotional awareness training; self-regulation skills building; and fostering positive self-concept development (Arvidson et al., 2011; Bath, 2008; Kataoka et al., 2018; Kinniburgh, Blaustein, Spinazzola & van der Kolk, 2005; Walkley & Cox, 2013). The need for a system-wide approach to implementing trauma-informed practices is obvious (Perry & Daniels, 2016; Phifer & Hull, 2016; Reinbergs & Fefer, 2018); however, there is currently no commonly accepted, empirically validated framework for successfully integrating sustainable trauma-informed practices in school settings. This is likely because educators are not adequately trained or qualified in this area, and the available funding does not permit for each school to have a psychologist or other mental health professional on staff and easily accessible.

Studies evaluating the impact of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) continue to be conducted, however, few of these studies are looking specifically at a Canadian population (Afifi, 2018). There are a number of Canadian studies focusing on child abuse and household dysfunction, but it is unclear how many Canadian studies are concentrating specifically on the typical ACEs (physical abuse, verbal abuse, sexual abuse, physical neglect, emotional neglect, parent with an alcohol addiction, mother who is a victim of domestic violence, a family member in prison, a family member diagnosed with a mental illness, or the disappearance of a parent through divorce, death or abandonment) (Bethell et al., 2014; Whitfield, 1998). Canadian ACEs
data is needed so as to avoid generalizing and adapting practices and policies based on data from other countries that may not be representative of Canadian students.

The lack of reliable data regarding the number of Canadian students impacted by trauma poses a significant challenge to addressing the POP. A systematic review of trauma screening measures for children and adolescents was conducted and found that while many of the instruments measured trauma exposure or symptomology, limited psychometric evidence was available to support the use of these measures in school settings (Eklund, Rossen, Koriakin, Chafouleas & Resnick, 2018). Without reliable measures to screen for trauma-affected students, it may be difficult to convince those with decision-making power within the school board to designate resources to address the POP. It may also be challenging to motivate school board staff to engage in the change process as the value of addressing the POP is difficult to articulate precisely.

Another significant challenge in addressing the POP will be supporting school board members to shift their mindsets around student behaviour and its function. It will take time for educators to build trusting relationships with students impacted by trauma, and as such, the positive impact of implementing trauma-sensitive practices is unlikely to be quickly felt. It may be difficult to continue to motivate and mobilize educators to persevere through the change process when challenges arise and goal attainment seems distant.

It will be important for educators to understand that they do not need to know what specific traumatic event(s) a student has experienced in order to effectively support that student. Educators may need guidance to continue to act as their roles require without stretching beyond the boundaries of their expertise. Conflicts may also arise if the trauma-sensitive practices are incongruous with an educator’s views of their role responsibilities. Educators may need to
approach their roles differently in order to re-engage children and youth who are impacted by multiple complex stressors and trauma, acting as both a carer and an educator (Morgan, Pendergast, Browk & Heck, 2015).

School days are busy and often challenging, even more so when one is supporting a student impacted by trauma. The division of labour may be an area of concern for some educators who do not feel confident in their capacity to support a student impacted by trauma or who may feel overwhelmed by the many demands of their role. Without some form of inclusive leadership to articulate the challenges and potential solutions generated by frontline staff to school board leaders who are further up the hierarchy, it will be difficult to address the POP.

Another challenge is the continued limited amount of available human and financial resources within the school board to support students impacted by trauma and the staff working with them. School board decision-makers must continue to be creative when allocating resources to ensure that the needs of all staff and students are met throughout the change process. The author and her change leading team will encourage decision-makers to consider the literature on trauma-informed schools and the resources they may save over time by empowering educators to integrate trauma-sensitive, evidence-based practices into their pedagogies, policies and procedures.

**Leadership-focused Vision for Change**

The Change Path Model described by Cawsey, Deszca and Ingols (2016, pp.53-58) provides direction as to how the desired change might be effectively established. This model fits well with the POP as it breaks down the change process and provides detailed steps for affecting the desired change (Cawsey, Deszca & Ingols, 2016, pp.6).
Currently, educators throughout the school board have inadequate awareness and understanding of the impact of trauma and toxic stress on their students’ learning and development. Consequently, they are failing to consistently demonstrate trauma-sensitive practices in their teaching practices. Integrating trauma-informed practices into educator pedagogies and school policies and procedures will help to further promote the development of trusting relationships among educators and students (Perry & Daniels, 2016; Phifer & Hull, 2016; Reinbergs & Fefer, 2018). It will also promote and reinforce students’ resiliency skills. Inclusive, authentic leadership practices demonstrated by the author and her team will help to establish a trauma-informed approach to education throughout the school board.

**Change Drivers**

A fundamental belief of the school board is that public education is an investment in the future of all peoples and communities. In relation to this belief, one of the school board’s strategic priorities is to “provide programs for the betterment of all students, to acquire the skills necessary for good citizenship and to become active members of their community” (Organization X, 2019). Students impacted by trauma are at greater risk of poor academic achievement and weak social and emotional functioning (Blodgett & Lanigan, 2018; Shonk & Cicchetti, 2001; Walkley & Cox, 2013; West et al., 2014). When school boards approach interactions with students using trauma-informed practices, they are better prepared to provide the educational and social-emotional supports required for students to reach their potential (Phifer & Hull, 2016).

Perry and Daniels (2016) found healthy social-emotional development and academic success to be correlated. Long-term stress can lead to decreased abilities in memory consolidation, concentration and sustained attention, which can have a significant impact on a student’s academic performance and behavior at school. Perry and Daniels (2016) describe how
the routine, consistency and predictability inherent in the typical school day makes schools ideal for the delivery of trauma-sensitive interventions. These authors emphasize the importance of educators’ understanding of the widespread impact of trauma and the potential path to recovery. They recommend that school leaders recognize the signs and symptoms of trauma from a systems perspective. This way, trauma knowledge can be effectively integrated into the school board’s policies and procedures so as to create a trauma-informed approach to education in every school.

School board staff are also impacted by their interactions with students who have experienced trauma (Koenig, Rodger & Specht, 2017; Lucas, 2007; Souers & Hall, 2016, pp. 44). As a psychoeducational clinician splitting her time between two high schools and four elementary schools, the author has experienced personally the overwhelming symptoms of compassion fatigue and burnout. The application of a trauma-informed approach across schools would likely result in improved student behaviour and academic progress, which would also positively impact educator job satisfaction and wellbeing (Koenig, Rodger & Specht, 2017; Phifer & Hull, 2016).

Student mental wellness is an important concern on the minds of most educators. The school board has endured the loss of three students to death by suicide in the past two years. The impact of these loses is profound not only the schools who were directly affected, but throughout the school board as its members serve a relatively small and tight knit community where everyone seems to be connected in one way or another. Increasing trauma knowledge is necessary not only to hopefully prevent these types of tragedies in the future, but also to help educators feel more confident in their capacities to support their students and each other as they cope with these traumatic loses.
The change initiative is also particularly relevant now as it relates to the school board’s commitment to reconciliation with our Indigenous community partners. The school board has been working closely with the Indigenous communities in our district to foster supportive, healing relationships so that its members can better prepare students to become valued, contributing members of their communities. As the school board works together with its Indigenous community partners to build these connections, trauma-awareness is essential, especially as it relates to the impact of residential schools on many of our Indigenous school community members. Better integration of trauma-informed practices in educator pedagogies and in school policies and procedures is necessary to support some, but will benefit all of our school community members.

**Leading the Change: Tools and Practices**

Organizations are more than structures, they are social inventions (Greenfield, 1973). The transforming mechanism of an organization lies within its individual members and often leaders must manage conflicting values and beliefs held by organizational members in order to successfully effect change (Creswell, 2007, pp.15-31; Greenfield, 1973). For this reason, the author is less concerned with the school board’s structural processes, and is paying closer attention to the values, goals and motivators of the school board’s decision-makers and frontline staff in designing and implementing the change plan.

Person-organization fit is the congruence between member values and the organization’s norms and values (Chatman, 1989). Person-organization fit is a good indicator of member job satisfaction and organizational commitment (O’Reilly, Chatman and Caldwell, 1991). Therefore, it is important for leaders to consider the influence members have on the school board and how they may improve person-organization fit among members (Chatman, 1989).
Gentile’s Giving a Voice to Values framework for leading change is particularly relevant to addressing the POP, as individual and organizational values will need to be effectively articulated, and ethically analyzed and clarified in order to begin to address some of the core challenges affecting the POP (Cawsey, Deszca & Ingols, 2016, pp.48-51). School board leaders and members will need to know their own values and also the values held by the school board and understand the impact that acting on these values has on the POP (Cawsey, Deszca & Ingols, 2016, pp.48-51; Gentile, 2015). School board leaders will need to analyze and understand the actions taken by members as a result of their individual values and begin to work with them to adjust their values where possible to better align with those held by the school board. Continuous analysis and discussion around individual and school board values and the impact of acting on those values to address the POP will be necessary to effectively initiate and maintain the desired change. The Giving a Voice to Values framework also provides tools for rehearsing and refining the change process through peer coaching, scripts and strategies for values driven behaviours, which aligns well with strategies outlined in the research literature on teaching trauma-sensitive practices (Carello & Butler, 2015; Phifer & Hull, 2016; Walkley & Cox, 2013).

In his article, Leading Educational Change: Reflections on the Practice of Instructional and Transformational Leadership, Hallinger (2003) discusses the leadership role of principals and compares and integrates two leadership models, instructional and transformational leadership. The findings of this article indicate that the effectiveness of either model is linked to the context of individual schools. It also suggests that the conceptualization of both models evolves to meet the needs of ever-changing school environments. Hallinger (2003) states that no single management or leadership style is appropriate for all schools and emphasizes the importance of evaluating each school context individually and tailoring the change initiative to
fit each school. While the change is likely to be initiated at the board level, in order for it to be effective, each leader throughout the school board’s hierarchy, including principals, will need to initiate and support the vision for change using a leadership style that is effective within his or her context. As a result, the change initiative may look different at different levels of the school board. It is important to note that leading this change process is not the responsibility of a single individual or team and that distributed leadership practices will need to be applied (Harris, Leithwood, Day, Sammons & Hopkins, 2007). As such, inclusive leadership practices will need to continue to be modeled and encouraged by those further up the leadership hierarchy so that these values begin to be demonstrated more consistently in schools (Ko, Ma, Bartnik, Haney & Kang, 2018). The author and her team will engage in inclusive leadership practices as they speak with educators about their trauma knowledge and their individual learning and support needs which will likely be unique based on their individual work settings and the student population they serve.

With the appropriate knowledge and supports, parents, counsellors, teachers, coaches and other school community members are all in a position to support the healing and development of children and youth who have experienced trauma (Bath, 2008; Kataoka et al., 2018). Kinniburgh et al. (2005) describe school settings as ideal for the delivery of trauma-sensitive supports, as schools can provide a flexible model of intervention that is embedded in a context that is already focused on developmental and social-emotional skills growth. As part of the Mobilization and Acceleration phases of the Change Path Model (Cawsey, Deszca & Ingols, 2016) the author and her team will initiate professional development opportunities for all school board staff, including administrators, teachers, support staff, custodians, secretaries and bus drivers with the support of the Superintendent of Education and the Manager of Psychology Services.
Dudar, Scott and Scott (2017) discuss the cycle of change failure. They caution that professional development is often thought of as a “magic bullet” to policy implementation; however, it is often inappropriately structured and as a result, it often fails to be effective. Walkley and Cox (2013) recommend intensive staff training and professional development as important factors for successfully implementing trauma-informed practices in schools. Training and professional development opportunities need to be carefully structured and delivered in order to be effective. They should draw on evidence-based strategies used by other schools who have successfully become trauma-informed (e.g. ARC model: Attachment, Self-regulation and Competency (Arvidson et al., 2011); Sanctuary Model (McInerney & McKlindon, 2014). Connections will also be made to other strategies and programs already being implemented by educators and promoted by the school board to demonstrate how they align well with trauma-informed practices (e.g. Supporting Minds Curriculum (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013) and Collaborative Problem Solving (Greene, 2008). The author and her team will draw on information from the literature on these programs when creating professional development opportunities for school board staff and students.

Organizational Change Readiness

Armenakis, Harris and Mossholder (1993) identified five characteristics that provide insight into an organization’s readiness for change. These characteristics include: whether or not an identification of a gap between the organizations current and desired states; whether or not members believe that the proposed change is the right change; whether or not members’ have confidence in their abilities to make the change successfully; whether or not the change is supported by key organizational leaders; and whether or not the “what’s in it for me” question has been answered (Cawsey, Deszca & Ingols, 2016, pp.105-107).
In identifying the POP, the author has completed the first stage of the Change Path Model, Awakening (Cawsey, Deszca & Ingols, 2016, pp.53-58) and has met Armenakis, Harris and Mossholder’s (1993) first characteristic of an organization that is ready for change. A gap has been identified between the school board’s current and desired states, and data has been gathered to support the need for change.

The school board is currently in the Mobilization phase of the Change Path Model, as a communication plan involving education, participation, facilitation, support and negotiations with other school board members is being developed and enacted (Cawsey, Deszca & Ingols, 2016, pp.53-58). The author and her team are working to persuade school board members that the proposed change is the right change (Armenakis, Harris & Mossholder, 1993). The author and her change leading team will meet with various special interest groups within the school board to present their research and findings so as to encourage their support of the change initiative. The author and her team are working to answer the “what’s in it for me question” that many educators have (Vakola, 2014).

Momentum for addressing the POP will continue to be developed during the Acceleration phase, in which the author will collaborate with other school board members to ensure they acquire the knowledge, skills, and mindset needed to support the change enacted (Cawsey, Deszca & Ingols, 2016, pp.53-58). This will help to bolster educators’ confidence in their capacity to achieve the change (Armenakis, Harris & Mossholder, 1993). The change will be tracked via data collection as it becomes more inherent in school board practices during the Institutionalization phase of the Change Path Model.

School board leaders are in support of the proposed change and have demonstrated that they are ready to take steps towards building trauma-sensitive practices into the school board’s
program delivery model. Senior leadership members are looking for ways to reduce work stress and burnout and to improve the mental wellness of both staff and students. They have recently approved the development of a training series about the impact of trauma on students and how school staff can best support these students to heal and reach their academic potential. The author and four colleagues from different departments within the school board have been collaborating to research and develop this training series. The training will first be shared with school administrators, and then gradually be disseminated to all school board teachers and support staff, including secretaries and custodial staff who also have frequent interactions and important relationships with students. While the budget for developing and delivering this training series is modest, the support of senior leadership to make a trauma-informed approach to education a priority within the school board has been very encouraging.

In her article, *What’s in There for Me? Individual Readiness to Change and the Perceived Impact of Organizational Change*, Vakola (2014) describes how individual readiness for change is influenced by individual personality characteristics as well as the contextual characteristics of the organization. The results of this study suggest that the perceived impact of organizational change mediates the relationship between pre-change conditions and individual readiness for change. Vakola (2014) discovered that organizational members who feel confident in their abilities within their roles demonstrate greater readiness for change. A trusting work climate, positive communication, and job satisfaction also influence individual readiness for change. Individuals who experience the organization in these ways tend to evaluate the positive consequences of making the change as important and are therefore more likely to embrace the change. It is important to consider change readiness at an individual level as well as an organizational level in order to ensure that the change will be embraced and implemented
effectively. Some educators may be readier to participate in the proposed change process than others. The author and her team, as well as the Superintendent of Education and the Student Support team will work with administrators and school teams utilizing inclusive leadership practices to ensure they first have a trusting work climate, with effective communication and support within their team. A trauma-informed approach requires a whole school approach, so it will be essential that school teams feel comfortable and supported by each other before trauma-sensitive strategies are intentionally integrated into their practices (Phifer & Hull, 2016).

The author has heard many anecdotal stories from staff and students about positive and negative experiences regarding how trauma and the support they have or have not received has impacted them. Many educators are looking for guidance around how to support trauma-affected students to improve their functioning within the classroom and their overall academic, social and emotion trajectories.

Conclusion

Educators throughout the school board are aware and voicing that they have inadequate trauma knowledge and feel they lack the capacity to effectively support trauma-affected students to reach their potential. Analysing the POP using Bolman and Deal’s multiple framework model (2013) has highlighted the discrepancies between the school board’s tasks, people, structure and culture. School board staff, students, families and community partners are currently struggling to function together cohesively. Instances of truancy and discipline referrals, suspensions and expulsions, mental health challenges, poor academic performance and limited communication and collaboration between school board staff, students, families and community partners are signs of this. When viewed through a critical and social justice lens, it is clear that inequities and injustices exist for students and staff within the school board and that the school board must
devise actionable steps to address this. By engaging in emergent and authentic leadership in the context of the school board’s Engagement Model, the author has created an inclusive, trauma-informed framework for leading the change process.
Chapter 2
Planning and Development

In the previous section, the need to address educators’ lack of trauma-knowledge and resulting failure to consistently integrate trauma-informed practices into their pedagogies and school policies and procedures was made clear. In this section the author will describe her Trauma-Informed Inclusive Leadership Framework (Hollander, 2009, pp. 3-8; Leithwood, 2012; Phifer & Hull, 2016; SAMHSA, 2014), share a critical organizational analysis and discuss possible solutions to the identified POP.

Framework for Leading the Change Process

The proposed change is being developed in response to somewhat unexpected challenges in supporting the current generation of students, and is also meant to be proactive, so that school board staff will be better prepared and feel more confident in their capacity to support future students as well. Inspiration for the author’s Trauma-Informed Inclusive Leadership Framework is taken from the structure of the Ontario Leadership Framework (OLF) (Leithwood, 2012; The Institute for Education Leadership, 2013), the literature on inclusive, ethical and authentic leadership practices, and the core principles of trauma-informed care and is influenced by critical and social justice lenses.
Figure 3. The author’s Trauma-Informed Inclusive Leadership Framework (adapted from Báez et al., 2019; Davies, Popescu & Gunter, 2011; Faubert, 2017b; Hollander, 2009; Ko et al., 2018; Leithwood, 2012; Mitchell et al., 2015; Phifer & Hull, 2016; Ryan, 2006; Ryan, 2014; SAMHSA, 2014; The Institute for Education Leadership, 2013; Wang, 2018).

Leadership Style

Leithwood (2012) defines leadership as the exercise of influence on organizational stakeholders that promotes the achievement of the organization’s vision and goals. Similar to the OLF, leadership under the author’s Trauma-Informed Inclusive Leadership Framework is inclusive in that leadership may come from many sources, including: administrators, parents, teachers, support staff and students (Hitt & Tucker, 2016; Hollander, 2009, pp. 3-8; Leithwood, 2012; Leithwood & Azah, 2014; Mitchell et al., 2015; The Institute for Education Leadership, 2013). Leadership is reciprocal, meaning there is some give and take from both the leader(s) and
followers, rather than exclusively hierarchical. Leadership is exercised through relationships between and among individuals and groups. This style of leadership aligns well with the school board’s Engagement Model as it promotes citizenship, communication, critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration among organizational members (Organization X, 2019). Leadership is successful to the extent that it makes a significant, positive, ethically defensible contribution towards the achievement of the organization’s vision and goals (Leithwood, 2012; Leithwood & Azah, 2014; The Institute for Education Leadership, 2013; Weymes, 2002). The author will clearly articulate to all stakeholders how becoming trauma-informed and trauma-responsive will promote the achievement of their own professional goals, as well as the school board’s vision and broader goals. Students impacted by trauma are at a disadvantage in the education system and educators are burning out (Koenig, Rodger & Specht, 2017; Lucas, 2007; Souers & Hall, 2016, pp. 44). Strategic social justice initiatives are required in order to address this (Ryan, 2016). The change initiative will support educators to purposefully integrate trauma-informed practices into their pedagogies and administrators to consider their school’s policies and procedures from a trauma-informed approach. This will result in a significant, ethically defensible contribution towards fostering the success of every student every day.

In order for the proposed change to be successful, a flexible approach to leadership and change implementation will be required (Chafouleas et al., 2016; Reinbergs & Fefer, 2018). There are significant differences between elementary and secondary schools, including size, culture, managerial roles, curriculum complexity and goals. Elementary schools tend to be more collaborative and student oriented, while secondary schools value more specific course achievements (Leithwood, 2012). There are also significant differences in the individual cultures and values among schools. Therefore, change strategies will need to be tailored to meet each
individual school’s specific needs. Strategies for meeting each school’s needs will be discussed later in this OIP.

Like the OLF, the Trauma-Informed Inclusive Leadership Framework is a shared leadership framework that works to create a more democratic organization. (Hitt & Tucker, 2016; Leithwood, 2012; Leithwood, 2014; The Institute for Education Leadership, 2013). A more democratic approach to leadership generates greater opportunities for educator development, for collective learning and for capacity building to respond effectively to complex challenges within schools, such as supporting students impacted by trauma. This framework also promotes student achievement as it allows educators to cope productively with the sometimes rapid succession of administrators in schools (Leithwood, 2012; The Institute for Education Leadership, 2013). Administrators within the school board regularly move schools, while other educators tend to remain in specific school settings longer. These educators with greater knowledge of the school community have a responsibility to share information with the new administrator about their school’s current goals and values and to listen to and contribute to the new administrator’s vision and goals for the school.

**Leadership Lenses**

The Trauma-Informed Inclusive Leadership Framework is also well aligned with the Safe Schools Act (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2000) as it promotes a positive inclusive school climate (Hollander, 2009; Leithwood, 2012; The Institute for Education Leadership, 2013). The Trauma-Informed Inclusive Leadership Framework allows opportunities for all educators within the school board to influence school and system decision-making with regards to building trauma-informed schools as it encourages all school community members to share their concerns and ideas with the author and her change leading team. This reciprocal communication fostered
by respect, responsiveness, recognition and responsibility will help to improve the educational experiences of diverse and disadvantaged students as their needs are more likely to be heard (Hollander, 2009). This is congruent with a critical and a social justice lens (Ryan, 2014).

There may be some educators who resist the Trauma-Informed Inclusive Leadership Framework for change because they do not view the vision for change as aligning with their own leadership values and practices. While the school board promotes inclusive leadership practices with its Engagement Model, the school board is still a fairly conservative institution with a traditional hierarchical structure. Those in formal leadership positions may struggle to distribute leadership to other organizational members and to share their decision-making power by offering others a voice. Gaining buy-in to the plan for change from formal school leaders (principals and vice-principals) and motivating them to support their staff in integrating trauma-informed practices into their work behaviours is attainable but may be challenging in certain cases where school leaders need to adjust their own existing mindsets.

Carefully considered efforts to coordinate the actions of those providing leadership during the change initiative in each school is a key component to effectively integrating a trauma-informed approach to education under the Trauma-Informed Inclusive Leadership Framework. As there is a hierarchical structure to leadership activities within the school board, administrators will be essential in promoting the change initiative in their schools. They must support the capacity development of their staff and continue to build trusting relationships with and among them. Administrators must also build a collaborative culture that allows for inclusive leadership to be embraced by all members as reflected in the school board’s Engagement Model and in the author’s Trauma-Informed Inclusive Leadership Framework. It will be essential for the author to gain administrator buy-in to her vision for change.
The success of this practical approach to leadership within a large school board is also dependent upon formal leaders acting in ways that are sensitive to the specific features of their schools, including those with whom they work. The application of the change framework may look slightly different in each school as the change process is enacted given that each school is influenced by a number of unique priorities.

**Trauma-Informed Principles**

According to Phifer and Hull (2016) trauma-informed schools realize the impact of trauma and toxic stress on students and educators, recognize the related symptoms, and respond by integrating knowledge about trauma into policies and practices in order to reduce the risk for re-traumatization. Phifer and Hull (2016) identify six key components of trauma-informed schools. Trauma-informed schools provide the experience of safety in all school environments. They create trust among staff and students. They create opportunities for peer support. They encourage collaboration among all members, staff and students, and foster empowerment for all. They are also aware of and responsive to cultural, historic and gender related challenges experienced by all members. These core components of trauma-informed schools are recognized and promoted by other authors as well (Bath, 2008; Carello & Butler, 2015; Chafouleas et al., 2016; Cummings et al., 2017; McInerney & McKlindon, 2014; SAMHSA, 2014; Walkley & Cox, 2013; Zakszeski, Ventresco & Jaffe, 2017). The literature on trauma-informed practices in schools reports the following positive results: increased academic achievement, improved school climate, increased graduation rates, improved educator job satisfaction and retention, increased community and family engagement, reduced challenging behaviours, reduced reports of stress, improved attendance, reduced discipline referrals, decreased instances of bullying, reduced needs for special education programming and mental health supports, decreased dropout rates and
reduced rates of educator burnout and reports of compassion fatigue (Blodgett & Lanigan, 2018; Chafouleas et al., 2016; Cummings et al., 2017; Koenig, Rodger & Specht, 2017; Lucas, 2007; McInerney & Mcllindon, 2014; Souers & Hall, 2016, pp. 44; Walkley & Cox, 2013; West et al., 2014). The application of these principles as part of the Trauma-Informed Inclusive Leadership Framework will help to facilitate the integration of trauma-sensitive practices throughout the school board.

**Other Organizational Leadership Frameworks**

Other organizational leadership framework theories were considered, including the Learning-centered Leadership Framework (Hitt & Tucker, 2016; Murphy, Elliot, Goldring & Potter, 2006) and the Essential Supports Framework (Hitt & Tucker, 2016; Sebring, Allensworth, Bryk, Easton & Luppescu, 2006); however, no existing leadership framework encompassed all of the author’s leadership goals, especially given the author is not in a formal leadership position. The Trauma-Informed Inclusive Leadership Framework is believed to provide the best overall fit with this author’s leadership values and the school board’s leadership approaches. The Trauma-Informed Inclusive Leadership Framework takes much of its structure from the OLF framework, which was designed specifically for application within school settings in Ontario. The OLF allows for multiple formal leaders to take on leadership tasks, which aligns well with the school board’s inclusive values; however, it does not extend to those who are not in formal leadership positions but who engage in leadership activities like the author. The Trauma-Informed Inclusive Leadership Framework allows for flexibility of leadership roles within the school board with respect to building trauma-awareness. It recognizes that each school setting may look different and therefore, may require different supports and resources. New voices from individual schools will need to be sought out and heard in order to be sure the change initiative benefits from each
school’s unique strengths and meets its individual needs. The OLF is built on the knowledge gained from the review of forty-seven empirical works, thirty-six of which were published after 2007, indicating that it is a reliable and relevant framework (Hitt & Tucker, 2016). Much of the literature on building trauma-informed schools states the importance of an inclusive approach to leading the change and emphasizes how all school members have a role to play in supporting the healing of trauma-impacted students (Carello & Butler, 2015; Perry & Daniels, 2016; Phifer & Hull, 2016; Reinbergs & Fefer, 2018; Walkley & Cox, 2013). Expanding the OLF to include the voices of those not in formal leadership positions in decision-making while reflecting on challenges through critical and social justice lenses will help to further the change process and integrate a trauma-informed approach to education throughout the school board. A further critical analysis of the school board is now required to understand the current infrastructure and climate of the school board so as to create an informed future vision and goals that will be motivating for school board members to support.

**Critical Organizational Analysis**

Armenakis, Harris and Mossholder (1993) identified five factors that depict an organization’s readiness for change including: the identification of a gap between the organization’s current and desired state; the members believe that the proposed change is the right change; the members have confidence in their abilities to make the change successfully; the change is supported by key organizational leaders; and the “what’s in it for me” questions have been adequately answered (Cawsey, Deszca & Ingols, 2016, pp.105-107; Vakola, 2014).

The author has identified that a gap does exist between the school board’s current state and its desired state. Presently throughout the school board, students continue to demonstrate challenging behaviours that negatively impact their school experience and academic
achievement. The school board’s EQAO (Education Quality and Accountability Office) scores continue to be below provincial averages in reading, writing and mathematics across grades three, six and nine (Organization X, 2018). Graduation rates continue to fall below the provincial average of 86.5 percent at 80.5 percent (Pedro, 2017; Stacey, 2017). The school board also has a significant number of transient students, or students that float between school boards, which makes it difficult to know and meet the social emotional and learning needs of these students (Stacey, 2017). Referrals for school-based psychology services are high. This author currently has roughly sixty students from six different schools, including four elementary schools and two secondary schools, on her caseload for counselling and consultation supports. Two students died by suicide during the 2017-2018 school year and also during the 2018-2019 school year, and several others were referred to hospital and community support agencies following suicide risk assessments completed by the author. The author and her team believe that the lack of trauma knowledge and support strategies in place in schools presents a significant barrier to the school board achieving its mission of fostering the success of every student every day. Research has demonstrated that students with a history of trauma or toxic stress are more likely to experience higher rates of truancy, increased discipline referrals, more frequent suspensions and expulsions, decreased academic performance, and increased mental health challenges compared to students with no history of trauma (Blodgett & Lanigan, 2018; McInerney & McLindon, 2014; Shonk & Cicchetti, 2001; Walkley & Cox, 2013; West et al., 2014).

The Children’s Mental Health Ontario website states that as many as one in five children and youth in Ontario experience some form of mental health problem (Children’s Mental Health Ontario, 2018). Emergency department and hospital visits by children and youth experiencing mental health disturbances have risen by 54 percent and 60 percent respectively over the past ten
years. During the 2017-2018 calendar year, Rebound, a community-based support agency for children and youth, provided services to about 1992 children and youth. These supports included: providing meals and housing, alternative classrooms, access to medical and mental health supports and social-emotional and resiliency skill development group programs (Rebound, 2019).

It is difficult to say whether the underwhelming graduation rates and test scores or the increase in mental health disturbances, hospital visits and accessing of community supports, is directly related to traumatic experiences. However, the experience of a mental health disturbance or finding oneself homeless or hungry may be a traumatic experience in and of itself. Many of these children and youth are attending schools within the school board’s district and, in its current state, the school board is not equipped to meet their needs as they relate to the impact that their trauma experiences are having on their development, social-emotional functioning and learning.

Educators throughout the school board are doing their best to meet their students’ needs based on the skills that they have. Many professional development opportunities have been sponsored and promoted by the school board including: Behaviour Management Systems Training (Behaviour Management Systems, 2014), Mental Health First Aid Training (Mental Health Commission of Canada, 2019), School Mental Health Assist Training (School Mental Health-Assist, 2019) and SafeTALK Training (Centre for Suicide Prevention, 2019), and educators have willingly participated in them. While these professional development opportunities have equipped educators with a number of useful tools, none have specifically addressed a common root cause of the crises students often find themselves in- their experience of trauma and toxic stress. Educators are making fair use of the strategies they have learned from
the above-mentioned trainings, but are continuing to experience burnout and compassion fatigue. Research has explained that educators interacting directly with students impacted by trauma face an increased risk of burnout and compassion fatigue (Koenig, Rodger & Specht, 2017; Lucas, 2007; Souers & Hall, 2016, pp. 44). In order to address educator burnout and improve students’ mental wellness and academic success, educators require opportunities to learn about the impact of trauma and toxic stress on their students and how they can better support them. The plan for change will include information regarding how the author and her team will provide educators with the information and supports they need to better integrate trauma-informed practices into their pedagogies.

In identifying this gap and gathering support from stakeholders, the author has completed the first stage of the Change Path Model, Awakening (Cawsey, Deszca & Ingols, 2016, pp. 53-58) and has addressed Armenakis, Harris and Mossholder’s (1993) first requirement in determining the school board’s change readiness. A gap has been identified between the school board’s current and desired states, and data has been gathered to support the need for change.

The author and her team now need to begin the Mobilization phase of the Change Path Model by developing a communication plan that involves education, participation, facilitation, support and negotiations with other organizational members using the Trauma-Informed Inclusive Leadership Framework (Cawsey, Deszca & Ingols, 2016, pp.53-58; Hollander, 2009, pp. 3-8; Leithwood, 2012; Phifer & Hull, 2016; SAMHSA, 2014). The author and her team are working to persuade school board members that the proposed change is the right change (Armenakis, Harris & Mossholder, 1993). The author and her colleagues under the supervision of the Superintendent of Special Education and the Manager of Psychology Services are collaborating to create an informative presentation about trauma and its impact on students’
social, emotional, physical, spiritual and academic development. This training will first be delivered to various special interest groups within the school board, including those in formal leadership positions from both the special education department and the programming department, who will vet the presentation. This will provide opportunities for the author and her team to polish their training before sharing it with all stakeholders to promote support for the proposed change initiative. The training will also be used as a tool for answering the “what’s in it for me question” that many educators may have (Vakola, 2014).

Momentum for addressing the proposed change will continue to be built during the Acceleration phase, in which the author and her team will collaborate with school-based teams to facilitate the growth of evidence-based trauma knowledge and skills (Cawsey, Deszca & Ingols, 2016, pp.53-58). Efforts will also be undertaken to develop more inclusive cultures within individual schools through the use of inclusive leadership strategies by the author and her team members. The school board’s Student Support team is also already working with school leaders and teams to build more inclusive cultures through the demonstration of inclusive leadership practices (e.g. giving organizational members a voice to influence decision-making and the support they require to act creatively) (Ryan, 2006). These efforts will help to grow educators’ confidence in their capacity to engage effectively in the change process (Armenakis, Harris & Mossholder, 1993) and will encourage them to act more innovatively and take risks as they support each other to learn new skills (Javed, Naqvi, Khan, Arjoon & Tayyeb, 2017). The change process will be tracked via data collection as it becomes inherent in individual school practices throughout the school board during the Institutionalization phase of the Change Path Model.

A large part of creating trauma-informed schools is facilitating a culture shift that encourages more inclusive values and leadership behaviours (Ryan, 2006). It will likely be
challenging for some educators to adjust their mindsets around student behaviour, its functions, and the best ways to respond. The author’s inclusive leadership practices involving education, patience, collaborative communication and support will help to create this shift, as will the demonstration of authentic leadership behaviours. The author and her change leading team will act genuinely and with conviction, demonstrating both self and other awareness (Ko et al., 2018), as this will motivate other educators to engage in the change process (Eisenbeiss & Knippenberg, 2015). Encouraging other educators to view the challenges they experience (e.g. student challenging behaviour, more test scores, etc.) through critical and social justice lenses and with a trauma-informed approach will also help motivate them to query their way of doing things and be open to safe discussions with the author and her team about new strategies that may lead to improved results. Open, two-way dialogues that allow for individualized consideration and tailored learning opportunities will be promoted by the author and her team as reflected in the author’s Trauma-Informed Inclusive Leadership Framework. The author and her team will initiate and maintain the change by supporting educators to discover a balance that encourages reflection on current assumptions and practices and allows them to feel comfortable taking calculated risks in their attempts to integrate trauma-informed practices into their everyday work. The use of the ARTIC questionnaire will help the author and her team to better understand educators’ attitudes towards trauma-informed care and adjust their training and supports to meet educators where they are at on their learning journeys throughout the change process (Baker et al., 2016; Traumatic Stress Institute, 2019).

It will take time and effort for educators to build trusting relationships with students impacted by trauma, as many suffer from disordered attachment (Brunzell, Waters & Stokes, 2015; Erozkan, 2016). As such, the positive impact of implementing trauma-sensitive practices
in the classroom is unlikely to be quickly felt. Kunisch, Bartunek, Mueller and Huy (2017) emphasize time as essential to strategic implementation of organizational change, especially in a dynamic environment such as the school board. Educators will need to be continuously mobilized and motivated to persevere through the change process when challenges arise and goal attainment seems distant. The author and her team, along with other school leaders involved in the change process will continue to demonstrate inclusive leadership practices, engaging educators in collaborative problem-solving and recognizing their efforts and achievements throughout the change process, so as to help them see the success of their efforts in supporting the change.

School days are busy and often challenging, especially for educators working to support trauma-affected students (Koenig, Rodger & Specht, 2017; Lucas, 2007; Souers & Hall, 2016). The division of labor is likely to be an area of concern for some educators who may not feel confident in their ability to support a student impacted by trauma or who may feel overwhelmed by the many demands of their role. Those in formal leadership positions within each individual school may need to re-evaluate the structure of their leadership hierarchy and include a form of inclusive leadership so that challenges and potential solutions may be more efficiently articulated by frontline staff to those with decision-making power (Ryan, 2006).

Generally, the school board does a good job of distributing leadership and encouraging an inclusive approach; however, the culture of each individual school is somewhat different. This value of inclusive leadership will need to be more strongly encouraged by those further up the leadership hierarchy of the school board, through both their words and actions, so that these values begin to be demonstrated more consistently in schools (Ko et al., 2018). The author and her team will strive to promote and demonstrate inclusive leadership behaviours as well by
seeking input from new voices and giving others a platform to share their ideas throughout the change process. Leaders of individual schools (i.e. administrators) will be reminded of the need to demonstrate inclusive values in their leadership practices during Area Principal Meetings facilitated by the Superintendent and her colleagues who will continue to demonstrate and promote the school board’s Engagement Model which reflects these values. As challenges arise within schools while educators work to implement their new trauma knowledge into their practices, the author and her team will be available for consultation. They will encourage formal school leaders to listen to the many unique insights brought to the discussion by those not in formal leadership positions but who are instead on the frontlines supporting trauma-impacted students. The author and her team will engage school communities in collaborative problem-solving, in which each voice at the table holds unique value in supporting the team to come to a comprehensive understanding of the challenge and the necessary steps to resolving it.

A challenge of addressing the POP is the continued limited amount of available human and financial resources within the school board to support students impacted by trauma and the educators working with them. Formal leaders throughout the school board hierarchy continue to be creative in allocating resources to individual schools to ensure that the needs of all staff and students are met to the best of their ability (Leithwood, 2012). This creativity will need to continue and expand in order to achieve and maintain the desired change. Special attention will need to be given to school board policies and procedures as they come up for review to ensure that they are revised using a trauma-informed approach, and critical and social justice lenses. This will be the responsibility of the Superintendent of Education and her colleagues, including the Manager of Psychology Services, psychoeducational clinicians and program coordinators. The author and her team will be available for consultation as needed. They will also offer
insights and information to those with decision-making power about current policies and procedures that may be misaligned with a trauma-informed approach to education as appropriate.

Those in formal leadership positions may also need professional development regarding inclusive leadership practices and the school board’s Engagement Model so that they are better able to build relationships and develop staff skills in order to effectively distribute leadership opportunities. They may need support structuring their individual schools to better facilitate collaboration and to build productive relationships with student families and community partners (Wang, 2018). This support can be accessed through the Student Intendent of Education, program coordinators and the school board’s Student Support team.

Leithwood (2012) indicates that people are motivated by what they are good at, so the author and her team, along with formal school leaders, will work to provide opportunities for educators to become more skilled in trauma-sensitive practices so that they can be even more effective at teaching, a skill that they value highly. As educators feel more capable of integrating trauma-sensitive practices into their daily routines, they will be more motivated to do so (Phifer & Hull, 2016). The author and her team will endeavor to foster trusting relationships with other educators, as trusting relationships provide the necessary foundation for others to engage in the risks required to learn and try new things (Javed et al., 2017; Leithwood, 2012; The Institute for Education Leadership, 2013). These relationships will be built through open communication, collaborative problem-solving and recognition of educators’ efforts as they begin to apply a trauma-informed approach to their pedagogies.

While an inclusive leadership approach is demonstrated by many leaders throughout the school board, these values and behaviours need to be even further promoted at individual schools. Formal leaders must provide support and demonstrate consideration for each other, staff
and students (Hallinger, 2003; Ryan, 2006). Recognition of individual member accomplishments by both staff and students must be expressed frequently. Individuals and groups (e.g. teachers, educational assistants, lunch monitors, educational clinicians, social workers, students, parents, community partners, etc.) must be treated equitably and individual members’ unique needs and skills need to be considered and supported (Ryan, 2006). Educators must be encouraged to routinely reflect on what they are trying to accomplish with their students and how they are doing it, in order to identify areas for professional growth (Leithwood, 2012). Open discussions among educators should be encouraged so as to challenge the merits of current and alternative practices in relation to achieving the desired change. Leaders, including this author, must participate in learning throughout the change process as both the leader and the learner. The author will articulate this to those with decision-making power as the trauma training is being promoted.

In order to develop trauma-informed inclusive leadership, the author and her team will collaborate with those informal leadership positions within individual schools to develop clarity around what it means to be a trauma-informed school. She and her team will work with individual school to create goals that support the shared vision for change (e.g. how each individual school will demonstrate trauma-responsiveness). They will also help to determine individual roles for collaboration within school teams (i.e. who on the school team is a good candidate to become a trauma-informed champion for their building). A willingness to compromise with open and regular communication will be encouraged in a way that best meets each individual school’s needs (e.g. regular meetings, phone call check-ins, email, etc.). The author and her team, in collaboration with the Superintendent of Special Education, will need to problem-solve ways to find time for educators to work together within and between schools
INTEGRATING A TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACH

Leithwood (2012). A team approach to designing and implementing important school decisions and policies will be promoted to ensure that an inclusive, trauma-informed approach is utilized (Ryan, 2006).

In order to create productive relationships with student families and community partners, the author and her team will work with formal school leaders to create environments in which families and community members feel welcomed, respected and valued as partners in the students’ learning (Cummings et al., 2017; Galo et al., 2016). Educators will be encouraged to engage students’ caregivers in school activities. The author and her team will support other educators working directly with families by providing consultation and attending meetings to share recommendations directly with student families as appropriate (Ryan, 2006).

Finally, those in formal leadership positions in schools may require support to maintain safe and healthy school environments during the change process. The author and her team, in collaboration with the Coordinator for Safe Schools, will support formal school leaders to effectively communicate standards for non-violent behaviour within the school using a trauma-informed approach (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2000). The author will also work with formal school leaders to ensure these standards are met and upheld in an equitable manner (Ryan, 2006). Discipline practices will need to be re-evaluated using a trauma-informed approach and may require revision under the leadership of each school’s Superintendent and the Coordinator for Safe Schools (Plumb, Bush & Kersevich, 2016). The author and her team will work with educators and students to develop practices to identify and resolve conflicts quickly and effectively, using trauma-sensitive strategies by providing education, consultation and direct support as needed.
Possible Solutions to Address the Problem of Practice

As both educators and students are experiencing negative outcomes related to students’ experiences of trauma and toxic stress, it is necessary to support educators to purposefully integrate trauma-sensitive strategies into their pedagogies. The following solutions are proposed to address the POP.

Possible Solution 1: Maintain the status quo

Although the literature supports the integration of trauma-sensitive practices in schools to improve student engagement, achievement and mental wellness, and also educator job satisfaction and wellbeing (Chafouleas et al., 2016; Cummings et al., 2017; Phifer & Hull, 2016; Souers & Hall, 2016, pp. 44; Zakszeski, Ventresco & Jaffe, 2017), it is necessary to consider the benefits and challenges of doing so given current school conditions. It is possible that the current resources and supports available to staff are sufficient to meet the needs of students impacted by trauma, as it is possible that other factors are influencing student engagement, achievement and well-being. It may be simplest to maintain the current strategies and supports in order to prevent students from potentially being further negatively impacted by their experience of traumatic events by exposing them to a large change process in their schools. It is difficult to determine the extent to which trauma and toxic stress are responsible for the academic and social-emotional challenges faced by students given they are each unique. It is possible that only a portion of educators within the school board recognize students’ experience of trauma as severely negatively impacting student and staff outcomes. The majority of educators may feel sufficiently equipped and supported to ensure trauma-affected students achieve their potential.
Required Resources

Maintaining the status quo requires no additional resources; however, it does require that the currently available resources be sustained. In order to maintain the current level of support available to staff and students for promoting student engagement, academic success and mental wellness, the current level of funding would need to remain consistent. This is a known challenge. The school board is a publicly funded institution and as such, its budgets are subject to government and Ministry of Education policy changes. On March 15, 2019, the Ontario government published its plan to cut millions of dollars from public education by increasing class sizes, decreasing special education funding, and requiring secondary school students to participate in online courses (OSSTF/FEESO, 2019). The cuts included in this plan will make it very difficult for the school board to maintain its status quo.

The time required for educators to support students impacted by trauma and toxic stress varies depending on the student’s individual needs, his or her response to the traumatic experience, and his or her access to outside supports. Some students require significant one-to-one support to regulate their behaviour and engage in academic activities, while others require only occasional check-ins with a trusted adult. Typically, educators are able to make time in their busy schedules to connect with students and meet their needs. They meet with students before and after school, and sometimes during lunches or prep periods. Community volunteers also donate their time to fill in some of the gaps when educators may be unavailable (e.g. reading buddies; lunch monitors; parent volunteers). The flexibility educators currently demonstrate to connect with students is evidence of their great commitment to supporting the success of every student, every day.
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Maintaining the status quo will also require the same number of staff be available to continue connecting with students and building the trusting relationships that promote student academic and social-emotional well-being. This may be difficult given the government’s plan to increase class sizes and reduce the number of educators in schools. It is possible that community volunteers may be able to somewhat fill this gap; however, they will quite likely lack the expertise of educators who are trained to promote student academic and social-emotional well-being.

**Benefits and Challenges**

One benefit to maintaining the status quo is that educators would not need to endure what could potentially be an uncomfortable and difficult change process. They may simply carry on implementing their mastered strategies and utilizing available supports (e.g. referrals to the Student Support Team or Psychological Services). There is no added cost, financial or otherwise, to maintaining the status quo. A significant challenge to maintaining the status quo is the ever-changing needs of students. The current strategies and supports may not be sufficient to meet their needs and we may continue to see a decline in student engagement, academic performance, mental wellness and educator job satisfaction and retention. Another barrier to maintaining the status quo is the lack of control the school board has over the distribution of its available financial resources. The school board’s financial resources come mostly from government sources who dictate to a certain extent how these resources are spent. It may not be possible for the school board to continue to offer the current level of student and staff support as potential government-driven funding changes may prevent them from doing so.
Possible Solution 2: Provide Professional Development Opportunities for Educators

Much of the literature on trauma-informed care promotes education as an important part of integrating trauma-informed care into school practices (Chafouleas et al., 2016; Dorado, Martinez, McArthur & Leibovitz, 2016; McIntyre, Baker & Overstreet, 2019; Phifer & Hull, 2016). Educator knowledge of trauma-informed approaches grows significantly following professional development and this knowledge helps educators to understand just how effective and necessary these approaches are in their schools (McIntyre, Baker & Overstreet, 2019). The positive perceptions of trauma-informed approaches fostered during training also increases educators’ acceptance of these approaches and promotes high quality implementation of strategies.

Required Resources

It can be costly to provide educators with professional development on trauma-informed approaches to teaching. The school board has previously covered the cost for a small number of educators to attend trauma training through TLC (the National Institute for Trauma and Loss in Children) (Starr Commonwealth, 2019). This cost was roughly $450.00 per participant, plus travel costs ($0.55 per kilometer) and wages (which vary based on role), an expense that would be difficult for the school board to cover for any significant number of educators. Outside agencies also offer trauma trainings at a cost; however, they are not tailored to meet the unique needs of educators and students in school settings. The school board could approve a small team who has received the appropriate outside training to share their learning with other educators. This would save the expense of providing professional development facilitated by community partners to all educators and instead allow for an in-house training opportunity to be created. This would require educators with the appropriate expertise to volunteer to participate in the
necessary outside training and collaborate to create and deliver the in-house training. A minimum of five educators would be needed for this task as the school board covers a large geographic region and it would be difficult to distribute the information with any smaller of a group without this project consuming all of their time. The school board would also need to provide access to appropriate space and presentation tools (e.g. PowerPoint, projector, photocopying, etc.) in order for the in-house training to be delivered effectively.

**Benefits and Challenges**

Research has demonstrated that professional development regarding the integration of trauma-sensitive strategies in schools does increase educator knowledge of the impact of trauma on their students and how they can best support them (Chafouleas et al., 2016; Dorado et al., 2016; McIntyre, Baker & Overstreet, 2019; Phifer & Hull, 2016). It also promotes the acceptance and use of these strategies in school settings. While it may be costly and somewhat time consuming, it is possible for educators from within the school board with the appropriate expertise and training to create an in-house professional development opportunity for their fellow educators.

It may be challenging to motivate educators to engage in the professional development opportunity because it will likely be offered outside of the regular school day, as there is no money in the school board’s budget for release time. Those educators who are most interested in the training will likely sign up first, and then may become trauma-informed champions in their buildings who promote the training and strategies to their fellow school team members. Another barrier to this solution is the lack of support for educators to transfer their learning into their educational settings. If the training is just a singular learning opportunity, with no individual follow-up, it is unlikely that the change will be maintained over time (Shaffer & Thomas-Brown,
2015). Another challenge is the varying degrees of student needs; which begs the question: will professional development for educators be enough to foster the desired change throughout the school board? Some trauma-impacted students may require more intensive supports, and as such, it will be necessary for educators to know how to help them access this. While educators’ efforts will go a long way in helping trauma-impacted students to feel safe in their school environments, it may not be enough to re-engage some of our most highly impacted students and support their academic progress and mental wellness.

**Possible Solution 3: Create a Multi-Tiered Approach to Trauma Support**

Much of the recent literature on trauma-informed schools focuses on a multi-tiered approach to service delivery, as each students’ experience of toxic stress and trauma and their related symptoms can be unique and may require different levels of support (Chafouleas et al., 2016; Cummings et al., 2017; Phifer & Hull, 2016; Reinbergs & Fefer, 2018; Souers & Hall, 2016, pp. 44; Zakszeski, Ventresco & Jaffe, 2017). As each schools’ main job is to provide access to education and not necessarily to operate as a treatment facility, collaboration with community partners is required. Building community partnerships with agencies who deliver counselling, medical care, shelter and other related youth supports will be essential to the successful integration of trauma-sensitive practices within schools.

A multi-tiered approach to trauma-support in schools will include the provision of education, resources and supports so that educators can become trauma-informed and implement trauma-sensitive practices in their school settings. Partnerships with community agencies who provide relevant youth services will also be fostered to improve the ease of connection to supports for trauma-affected students.
**Required Resources**

In order to create in-house training opportunities for educators, the author and her team of four will need to participate in training through TLC (Starr Commonwealth, 2019), which is costly (approximately $450.00 each, plus travel costs and wages). The author and her team will also need to be granted release time to develop and deliver the training and to support educators to integrate their learning in their work settings as needed. Those in formal leadership positions (e.g. principals, vice principals, program coordinators, etc.) will need to promote the in-house training to all educators and support them to integrate their learning into their practices. The Superintendent of Education and the Manager of Psychology Services will encourage and support them to do this. Access to school board facilities and presentation tools will be required to deliver the training. Connections to community partners will need to be made and maintained also.

**Benefits and Challenges**

One significant challenge to delivering the in-house trauma training to all school board staff is that there is no money in the budget for release time, so educators must voluntarily sign up to participate in the training in the evening hours after the school day has finished (4:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.). There is a possibility of providing a version of the training during school meetings; however, it would need to be greatly condensed given the time allotment provided during school-based team meetings. Another barrier is that the training will be voluntary and so it may not reach some of the educators who could really benefit from it. Hopefully with some mentorship from trauma-informed champions and other leaders within their buildings, these individuals will be encouraged to participate in the training, especially after observing the anticipated success that trauma-informed champions will have in supporting some of the more challenging students.
within their buildings. A third challenge will be supporting those who participate in the training to transfer their learning from the contrived environments of the training sessions to their work environments and maintain their use of trauma-sensitive strategies overtime. The author and her change-leading team will be available to consult with and support educators in their individual work settings following the training as they begin to purposefully build trauma-sensitive strategies into their day-to-day interactions at school. Connecting students with community agencies may also be difficult as there is a limited number of community-based supports available to students in the school board’s district, especially in the more rural communities. Developing and sustaining community partnerships and supports will likely require some advocacy from school board leaders and some creative problem-solving with community partners.

Recognition of the benefits of multi-tiered approaches to trauma supports in schools is expanding (Chafouleas et al., 2016; Phifer & Hull, 2016; Reinbergs & Fefer, 2018; Shonk & Cicchetti, 2001; Walkley & Cox, 2013; West et al., 2014). A benefit of implementing a multi-tiered approach to trauma-support in schools is that it creates a fairly flexible framework that is able to meet the varying needs of students in their different school environments. A multi-tiered framework for services delivery includes early identification of risk; varied levels of intervention and support designed to teach skills to avoid more serious challenges; and continued data-driven evaluation of practices. Chafouleas et al. (2016) asserted that a multi-tiered framework for the delivery of trauma supports is critical to creating a trauma-informed approach to education as it allows fairly equitable access to supports for all students regardless of individual resources. Therefore, a multi-tiered approach to trauma supports in schools aligns well with the social
justice lens promoted in the author’s Trauma-Informed Inclusive Leadership Framework for driving the change.

**Analysis of Solutions**

In order for the POP to be addressed, the status quo must be challenged. Maintenance of the status quo will not sufficiently meet the ever-changing needs of students and is not within the school board’s control, as many of the resource decisions made by the school board are directly impacted by direction from the government and the Ministry of Education. The literature also tells us that education is an important component of the successful integration of trauma-informed practices in teacher pedagogies; however, education alone is not sufficient (Chafouleas et al., 2016; Dorado et al., 2016; McIntyre, Baker & Overstreet, 2019; Phifer & Hull, 2016; Shaffer & Thomas-Brown, 2015). Thus, it will be necessary to create and implement a multi-tiered approach to trauma supports throughout the school board. Although significant financial and human resources will be required at the outset, solution three appears to be the most likely to resolve the POP and produce the desired change. Similar to the other listed possible solutions, solution three is subject to funding challenges; however, it is preferred because it capitalizes on the strengths of the current resources and supports already in place within the school board. This plan also involves all educators, students and community partners in the solution, which is reflective of the school board’s Engagement Model and the Trauma-informed Inclusive leadership approach. In the following section, the author will reflect further on her approach to leading the change and its ethical merits.

**Leadership Ethics and Organizational Change**

Ryan (2006) argues that leadership in schools needs to be about deeper moral purposes like social justice so that schools can do their part in contributing to a society that is fair for all.
Eisenbeiss and Knippenberg (2015) found support in their study for their assertion that ethical leadership increases follower effort and helping behaviours. Ko et al. (2018) define ethical leadership as the demonstration of normatively appropriate behaviour demonstrated through personal actions and interpersonal relationships. Ethical leaders also promote such behaviours in other organizational members through collaborative communication and reinforcement. These are both qualities of inclusive leadership, which is promoted in the school board’s Engagement Model, and which the author and her team will demonstrate throughout the change process. Ko et al. (2018) describe an ethical leader as an authentically moral person who effectively influences others often with a values-based management style. As the author strongly values student and educator wellbeing in her role as a psychoeducational clinician, her inclusive leadership style is very much shaped by these values. Ko et al. (2018) indicate that ethical leaders tend to focus more on transactional aspects of managing others and emphasize “other awareness.” They draw a distinction between ethical leadership and authentic leadership, claiming that authentic leaders emphasize “self-awareness.”

The author demonstrates qualities of both ethical and authentic leadership to ensure that educators and students feel their needs are met by her. During times of organizational change, ethical leaders actively participate in the change process, which increases follower satisfaction with the change process and motivates them to perform more effectively (Ko et al., 2018; Sharif & Scandura, 2014). The author is already working to create and maintain trusting relationships with her colleagues in the support role she plays within the school board by demonstrating both ethical and authentic leadership qualities. Van Gils, Van Quaquebeke, Knippenberg, van Dijke & Cramer (2015) discovered that morally attentive followers demonstrate greater deviance from leader directions when the leader is perceived as unethical. Therefore, in order for the proposed
changed initiative to be successful, the author and her team, as well as other leaders throughout the school board will need to effectively demonstrate ethical leadership. Sharif and Scandura (2014) encourage leader transparency and discussions with other educators as strategies to reaffirm a leader’s ethical values, which positively influences follower commitment to the change process. Transparency and respectful, two-way communication between leaders and educators will be strongly encouraged as part of the Trauma-Informed Inclusive Leadership Framework promoting the change initiative. Ethical leadership will be essential during the change process as it will allow educators and students to trust the integrity of the author.

It will be the responsibility of formal leaders within individual schools to ensure the safety of all educators and students within their buildings throughout the change process, as per the Safe Schools Act (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2000). Strategies implemented to manage student challenging behaviour will need to be included in each student’s individual safety and support plan. In time, as these support plans are updated, strategies will be reviewed to ensure they reflect a critical and a social justice lens, as well as a trauma-informed approach. It will be the formal school leaders’ responsibility to consult with the author or another member of her change leading team when challenges arise as new trauma-sensitive strategies are being learned and tried in their buildings. The trauma-sensitive strategies will be learned during training opportunities provided by the author and her team. The author and her team will focus largely on relationship building, social-emotional development, and effective discipline as recommended in the literature on trauma-informed schools (Chafouleas et al., 2016; Cummings et al., 2017; Phifer & Hull, 2016; Souers & Hall, 2016; Zakszeski, Ventresco & Jaffe, 2017). Training participants will receive a copy of the presentation slides so that they will be able to refer back to for review
of recommended strategies. Participants will also receive a list of recommended resources to review in order to further their learning, including reliable journal publications and books.

Dutro and Bien (2014) argue that trauma theory reveals two ways in which students’ experience of trauma can be productively conceptualized and used to analyze structural inequities within schools. First, they suggest that the trauma experiences students bring with them into the classroom may be used to potentially strengthen student connectedness to the school. Second, they indicate that recognizing how students are viewed and positioned within the school may result in further trauma that must be recognized and proactively addressed by school administrators and staff. Dutro and Bien (2014) state that student trauma experiences can be made productive both relationally and pedagogically in classrooms. They also highlight that students’ cumulative files follow them and may result in occasions for re-traumatization to occur through the unintentional marginalization of these students. School policy makers likely do not intentionally create these opportunities for further risk of trauma exposure to students, but when decisions are evaluated using a critical and a social justice lens, as well as a trauma-informed approach, they are still culpable.

The author and her team must support those in formal leadership positions throughout the school board to apply a trauma-informed approach to critically evaluate structural inequities within the school board. This way strategies can be developed to proactively address the issue of re-traumatizing students through unwitting policy decisions. For example, Howard (2018) recommends schools reconsider their approach to discipline in order to reduce the risk of harm to students due to disrupted attachments. She suggests that when suspending a student, which could result in attachment disruption, it is important to keep the time away from school as brief as possible and to ensure that those who have built strong relational connections with the student
continue these connections either via visits, emails or phone calls. This will help the student to understand that it was his or her actions that were unacceptable at school, not him or herself, and that those whom he or she has formed relationships with will continue to care about them in their absence. Increasing educator and decision-makers’ understanding of trauma-informed practices will hopefully result in reduced risk of re-traumatization for students.

There is a long-standing debate over who is responsible for student and youth mental health services: schools or community partners (Fazel, Hoagwood, Stephan & Ford, 2014). Community mental health services have clear pathways and requirements to gain consent and inform caregivers. The school board’s psychology team has similar pathways and requirements. In order to provide services for children under twelve years of age, the child’s legal guardian must sign a consent form, which outlines the limits to confidentiality. Children and youth older than twelve years old may sign their own consent form. If the psychoeducational clinician perceives that there may be a risk to the student’s safety, he or she must notify that child or youth’s legal guardian and the school administrator to ensure a plan for that student’s safety is shared and adhered to. Whole-school supports (tier one) may be viewed as a general school practice and, as a result, individual consent for specific services might not be perceived as necessary (Fazel et al., 2014). Formal school leaders are required to consult with the school board’s Mental Health Lead and or the author or another member of the school board’s psychology team to ensure the appropriate consents are received prior to beginning any school-wide or individual trauma-sensitive supports. Clear protocols for information sharing are also beneficial to both academic and health outcomes; however, the privacy and confidentiality essential to therapeutic relationships must be maintained. That said, a signed consent form is required if information is to be shared between a school and a community partner regarding a
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student. The school board has policies designed for information sharing that can be utilized by educators supporting trauma-affected students that include comprehensive consent documentation procedures.

Tensions between mental health and other school priorities (e.g. academics) have in some cases prevented schools from assigning resources for mental health education and support (Fazel et al., 2014). The school board’s primary role is to provide children and youth with a comprehensive education and to prepare them to become valued, contributing members of their communities. It is not the school board’s role to provide treatment for mental health disturbances. It is the role of community mental health care providers to provide tier three, targeted and intensive supports for children and youth with serious mental health disturbances. It would be unethical for a member of the school board’s psychology team to provide targeted, intensive treatment of trauma as these supports fall outside of their areas of expertise. It will be essential for the author and her team to develop and maintain positive connections with community partners to allow for efficient connection to community services for students at each tier so as to ensure they receive appropriate trauma supports. As much as possible, connections with community mental health support providers will need to be scheduled outside of school hours to avoid disruptions to a student’s education. Efforts will be required from both the school board and community partners to support students and their families to access community services outside of school time (e.g. taxi vouchers for transportation).

Member roles will need to be clearly defined throughout the school board, including the roles of community agencies, to ensure that students at each tier receive appropriate supports and that all support providers (i.e. educators, administrators, clinicians, nurses, social workers, etc.) feel comfortable in their capacity to provide the services they are expected to (Fazel et al., 2014).
The results of Reinke, Stormont, Herman, Puri and Goel’s (2011) study revealed that teachers report viewing school psychologists as being primarily responsible for most aspects of mental health service delivery in schools, including conducting screening, assessments and monitoring of student progress, as well as referring students to school or community services. They perceive their role in providing mental health supports as implementing classroom-based behaviour interventions. The teachers in this study felt that school psychologists also have a greater role to play in teaching social-emotional lessons. They reported feeling inexperienced and undertrained for supporting students’ mental health needs. Similar concerns regarding educators’ perceptions of their role responsibilities within the school system have been discussed by the author and her team. It will be important for educators to see the benefits of implementing trauma-sensitive practices in their classrooms as protective for all of their students. Educators may need support from formal school leaders and or the author and her team to find a healthy balance of social-emotional learning and curriculum delivery within their classrooms. The author and her team will have continued collaborative discussions with educators throughout the school board to ensure that all members work confidently within their role responsibilities.

Finally, educators interacting directly with students impacted by trauma face an increased risk of burnout, compassion fatigue and exposure to vicarious trauma (Koenig, Rodger & Specht, 2017; Lucas, 2007; Souers & Hall, 2016, pp. 44). Formal leaders at individual schools will be responsible for connecting staff with their Employee Assistance Program as needed. The author and her team will work closely with school teams to ensure appropriate self-care education and opportunities are also provided.
Conclusion

Currently, there is inadequate awareness and application of trauma-sensitive practices within the school board’s educational settings. The author and her team, under the supervision of the Superintendent of Special Education and the Manager of Psychology Services, will put into practice the author’s Trauma-Informed Inclusive Leadership Framework, inspired by the structure of the OLF (Leithwood, 2012; The Institute for Education Leadership, 2013), the literature on inclusive leadership practices, the core principles of trauma-informed care and shaped by both critical and social justice lenses in order to promote the change initiative.

As educators begin to purposefully integrate a trauma-informed approach routinely in their pedagogies and continue to form trusting relationships with their students, student outcomes and educator job satisfaction will be positively impacted (Carello & Butler, 2015; Perry & Daniels, 2016; Phifer & Hull, 2016; Walkley & Cox, 2013). A trauma-informed approach to education will become intrinsically reinforcing for both educators and students and will hopefully become best practice in all school settings in time. This will allow for the realization of a sustainable, trauma-informed approach to education throughout the school board. The following chapter will outline the author’s plan for change.
Chapter 3
Implementation, Evaluation, and Communication

The organization at the center of this OIP is a school board in Ontario that is committed to providing the children and youth of its district with a comprehensive education, so that they are prepared to become valued, contributing members of their communities. The school board’s leaders recognize the importance of member and student development, engagement and morale, as reflected in their application of the Engagement Model (Organization X, 2019). Under this model, intellectual, social and organizational engagement are cultivated in staff and students in order to promote the development of students’ character, citizenship, communication, critical thinking, and collaboration skills. Ethical and inclusive leadership practices are demonstrated and promoted by those in leadership positions throughout the school board as they seek to benefit from the diversity of skillsets held by their members in order to best support students.

The POP being addressed by this OIP is the inadequate integration of trauma-informed practices in educator pedagogies and in school policies and procedures. Currently, there is a lack of awareness and understanding of the potential impacts of trauma and toxic stress on student learning and development among educators and decision-makers throughout the school board. Without a thorough understanding of these potential impacts, it is challenging for educators to know how to best support trauma-affected students to reach their potential and be successful in their academics. Trauma, for the purposes of this change process, is defined as an extraordinary experience that overwhelms a student’s ability to cope (Souers & Hall, 2016). Toxic stress is a severe, extended or repetitive experience of adversity without a supportive caregiver that results in a prolonged or permanent abnormal physiological response to stressors (Franke, 2014). Examples of trauma and toxic stress may include such things as war, natural disaster, sexual
assault, motor vehicle accident, divorce, poverty, serious illness, loss of a loved one, bullying, etc. (American Psychiatric Association, 2013, pp. 265-290; Souers & Hall, 2016).

Students with a history of trauma or toxic stress are more likely to experience higher rates of truancy, increased discipline referrals, more frequent suspensions and expulsions, decreased academic performance, and increased mental health challenges compared to students with no history of trauma (Blodgett & Lanigan, 2018; McInerney & McKlindon, 2014; Shonk & Cicchetti, 2001; Walkley & Cox, 2013; West et al., 2014). Educators interacting directly with students impacted by trauma also face an increased risk of burnout, compassion fatigue and exposure to vicarious trauma, potentially contributing to their leaving the teaching profession (Koenig, Rodger & Specht, 2017; Lucas, 2007; Souers & Hall, 2016, pp. 44).

Currently the school board devotes a great amount of financial and human resources to support students who demonstrate behavioural difficulties, weak academic performance and poor self-regulation skills, often without understanding the root cause of many of these challenges: the students’ experience of trauma. With the appropriate knowledge and supports, parents, counsellors, teachers, coaches and other school community members are all in a position to support the healing and development of children and youth who have experienced trauma (Bath, 2008; Kataoka et al., 2018). The resulting questions relating to this POP include:

- Is there an urgency within the school board to become trauma-informed (Jones, Berg & Osher, 2018)? If so why?
- How does one know that the school board is prepared to develop a trauma-informed action plan to help create trauma-sensitive schools?
- What actions will need to be taken to address staff and student priorities in order to create trauma-sensitive schools?
How will one know that the schools within the school board are becoming increasingly trauma-sensitive?

**Change Implementation Plan**

**Leadership role and approach**

As indicated by Creswell (2007, pp. 15-31), the author brings to the school board her own experience, worldview and set of beliefs. The author holds advocacy and participatory values and believes the research conducted to support the OIP should contain a collaborative action agenda that will influence change within the school board, so as to improve the experience of its members and the community it supports (Creswell, 2007, pp.15-31). These advocacy and participatory values are related to the author’s preference to view problems of practice through critical and social justice lenses and to develop potential solutions through inclusive leadership practices. These same values are also reflected in the school board’s Engagement Model (Organization X, 2019) and the author’s Trauma-Informed Inclusive Leadership Framework (adapted from Báez et al., 2019; Davies, Popescu & Gunter, 2011; Faubert, 2017b; Hollander, 2009; Ko et al., 2018; Leithwood, 2012; Mitchell et al., 2015; Phifer & Hull, 2016; Ryan, 2006; Ryan, 2014; SAMHSA, 2014; The Institute for Education Leadership, 2013; Wang, 2018).

As a psychoeducational clinician within the school board, the author engages in emergent leadership practices as she is not in a formal leadership or managerial position. She influences others to recognize that the POP does in fact exist and persuades them of the need for organizational change through her interactions and relationships with colleagues and those in formal leadership positions and through the demonstration of her skillset in her area of clinical expertise. She is speaking up and leading by example, demonstrating authentic leadership practices to effect change (Ko et al., 2018). She has developed authentic leadership skills through
her academic and professional experiences and through the relationships she has built with other organizational members (Northouse, 2016, pp. 195-223; Walumbwa et al., 2008). Authenticity emerges through interactions with other organizational members when a leader acts with conviction and is genuine, which the author endeavours to be always. She also takes a somewhat critical approach to leadership in that she values supporting others to develop strong advocacy skills so that they are able to campaign effectively to get their needs met (Davies, Popescu & Gunter, 2011; Faubert, 2017b).

Within her role as a psychoeducational clinician, the author demonstrates inclusive leadership strategies as she collaborates with school teams and students to support them in helping struggling students become better engaged in their education (Hollander, 2009; Mitchell et al., 2015). Her inclusive view of leadership shaped by critical and social justice lenses allows her to focus on the individual and collective growth of school board staff, students and community members (Bass & Avolio, 1993; Northouse, 2016, pp. 162-193; Ryan, 2006; Ryan, 2014). The author is working with her team using her Trauma-Informed Inclusive Leadership Framework to strategize ways to convince all stakeholders to see her vision for change as both personally compelling and also connected to the broader vision of the school board’s and each individual school’s needs (Hitt & Tucker, 2016). This approach to communicating and leading the change will hopefully motivate all stakeholders to begin to understand the need for change and buy-in to the plan for change.

**Trauma-Informed Inclusive Leadership Framework Stages**

Leithwood (2012) identified five key stages in his framework for change that the author has adapted in her Trauma-Informed Inclusive Leadership Framework. Stage one involves creating a shared vision (Hitt & Tucker, 2016; Leithwood, 2012; The Institute for Education
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Leadership, 2013). Under the Trauma-Informed Inclusive Leadership Framework, this vision must reflect a trauma-informed approach shaped also by critical and social justice lenses.

Stage two is to identify specific, shared short-term goals (Hill & Tucker, 2016; Leithwood, 2012; The Institute for Education Leadership, 2013). Leithwood (2012; Leithwood, 2014) emphasizes the importance of creating these goals in such a way that they become embedded into members’ own goals, or they will have no motivational value. The Trauma-Informed Inclusive Leadership Framework will encourage all members to participate in the designing of these short-term goals.

Stage three involves considering each school’s infrastructure and working to build a culture of collaboration through distributed leadership practices (Leithwood, 2012; The Institute for Education Leadership, 2013). Latta (2009) indicates that organizational culture plays an important role in the success or failure of any change initiative and argues that a leader’s degree of cultural awareness will determine his or her effectiveness at facilitating the change process. There is a bilateral influence of organizational culture on the organizational change process, meaning that each school’s current culture will exert influence on and be influenced by the change process. Stages one through three of the Trauma-Informed Inclusive Leadership Framework also reflect the Mobilization phase of Cawsey, Deszca and Ingols’ (2016) Change Path Model.

Leithwood (2012) emphasizes the importance of school structures, policies, routines and standard practices as they can be a significant source of a school’s resistance to change. Inclusive leadership practices will be used by the author to better understand each school’s existing infrastructure and to problem-solve potential barriers to creating a trauma-informed approach to education in each school. The existing infrastructure of a school is designed to support that
school’s existing practices. Misalignment of these practices with the school’s desired state can significantly erode educators’ motivation to engage in the change process. Leithwood (2012) provides strategies for adjusting a school’s culture to become more collaborative and encourages distributed leadership practices as a means of motivating followers to engage in the change process.

Some school practices, such as exclusionary discipline practices (e.g. loss of recess, detention, suspension, etc.), are misaligned with trauma-sensitive practices (Souers & Hall, 2016, pp. 105-106). These types of practices will likely need to be discussed so that compromises can be reached that meet educator expectations and school policy requirements, and at the same time protect students from potential re-traumatization. Without an understanding of the impact of trauma and toxic stress, educators and administrators may have a difficult time moving away from some of these exclusionary discipline practices, which will make achieving a truly trauma-informed approach to education within their school setting challenging. The Trauma-Informed Inclusive Leadership Framework will allow for collaborative communication and decision-making as these misalignments come to light throughout the change process.

Stage four is to create high performance expectations for all members, including students, educators and those formally leading this change initiative (Hitt & Tucker, 2016; Leithwood, 2012; The Institute for Education Leadership, 2013). Throughout the change initiative, school teams will be encouraged to be innovative and to assume responsibility for achieving their schools’ vision of the change initiative with the collaborative support of the author and her team.

Stage five is to communicate vision and goals (Hitt & Tucker, 2016; Leithwood, 2012; The Institute for Education Leadership, 2013). Different formal and informal opportunities will be used to explain the overall vision and goals established for schools. Stages four and five of
this framework also reflect Cawsey, Deszca and Ingols’ (2016) Acceleration phase in the Change Path Model.

Creating trauma-informed schools

In order to begin to purposefully build trauma-sensitive practices into everyday school activities, it will be important for all school staff to have a common understanding of what trauma is, how it impacts students and families, and how they can best support trauma-affected students to heal and be successful in their schooling. The author and her team will work collaboratively to create an in-house trauma training opportunity focused on Phifer and Hull’s (2016) identified core principles of trauma-informed practices: Understanding trauma and stress; compassion and dependability; cultural humility and responsiveness; safety and stability; collaboration and empowerment; and resiliency and recovery (Phifer & Hull, 2016).

Figure 4. Fundamental principles of trauma-informed schools (Adapted from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration’s (SAMHSA) Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach, 2014).

Following the trauma training, the author and her team will be available upon request to meet with educators in their buildings to provide support as they attempt to integrate the principles of trauma-informed practice into their pedagogies, with principal approval and parental consent as required. Throughout the trauma training sessions, the author and her team will endeavor to inspire educators to become trauma-informed champions who demonstrate
emergent leadership in their schools by sharing their learning with their teams. The author and her team will also consult with administrators who express an interest in revising their school’s policies and procedures to reflect a trauma-informed approach. This review of school policies and procedures will be encouraged by the Superintendent of Education and her colleagues in formal leadership positions. School teams will also be encouraged and supported to engage students in social-emotional learning using already available resources, such as the MindUp curriculum (The Hawn Foundation, 2011). As administrators, educators and students work with the author and her team to integrate trauma-sensitive practices into their everyday school interactions, data will be collected to assess the impact of the change process.

Much of the recent literature on trauma-informed schools focuses on a multi-tiered approach to service delivery as each student’s experience of toxic stress and trauma and their related symptoms can look different and require different levels of support (Chafouleas et al., 2016; Cummings et al., 2017; Phifer & Hull, 2016; Reinbergs & Fefer, 2018; Souers & Hall, 2016, pp. 44; Zakszeski, Ventresco & Jaffe, 2017). As each school’s main job is to provide access to education and not necessarily to operate as a treatment facility, collaboration with community partners is required in order to meet the needs of all students.

Figure 5. Multi-tiered approach to a trauma-informed school system (adapted from Phifer & Hull, 2016).
Building community partnerships with agencies who deliver counselling, medical care, shelter and other related youth supports is also attainable and will be essential to the successful integration of trauma-sensitive practices within schools (Phifer & Hull, 2016; Reinbergs & Fefer, 2018). Many great partnerships with community agencies already exist. The author and her team, with the support of the school board’s Mental Health Lead, will reach out to community agencies to gain a clearer understanding about the services they provide and what their referral processes entail. This information will then be incorporated into a resource guide that will be posted on the school board’s staff website and shared with educators who attend trauma trainings. Ongoing connection with our community partners will help to facilitate ease of access to support services for trauma-impacted students and their families.

**Strategy for change**

The strategy for change is to provide education, resources and supports to educators so that they can become trauma-informed and implement trauma-sensitive practices in their school settings. The strategy for change also involves creating and maintaining community partnerships with agencies who provide relevant youth services to aid student and family connections to supports outside of school.

In order to integrate trauma-sensitive practices across all levels of the school board hierarchy, it has been important for the author to consider the following ten factors recommended by Chafouleas et al. (2016): governance and leadership; policy; physical environment; engagement and involvement; cross-sector collaboration; screening, assessment and treatment services; training and workplace development; progress monitoring and quality assurance; financing; and evaluation. A flexible framework for action planning in which the individual school context strongly influences decision-making is essential to the success of the
change initiative (Chafouleas et al., 2016; Plumb, Bush and Kersevich, 2016). Chafouleas et al. (2016) emphasize the importance of recognizing and articulating to others involved in the change initiative how integrating a trauma-informed approach in their settings is well aligned with their individual school goals, as well as board-wide goals. They also recommend focusing on measurable outcomes with decisions being based on data and on local context characteristics. Therefore, the six key components of trauma-informed schools described by Phifer and Hull (2016) may look different when applied in different schools. Overall though, the change process will be focused on facilitating a multi-tiered approach to the integration of trauma-sensitive practices in each school across the school board, concentrating first on preventative measures (e.g. teacher education, environment audits, social-emotional learning opportunities for students, etc.), followed by targeted small group supports (in collaboration with members from the special education team including psychoeducational clinicians and student support teachers and educational assistants), and connections to community supports for those students who would benefit from individualized, more intensive interventions (while still collaborating with the students’ school teams).

With the approval of the Superintendent of Education and the Manager of Psychology Service, the author will work with a small team to create a training program for educators to build trauma-knowledge. A large part of the initial training will focus on understanding each participants’ current values and why they might respond to situations in the way that they currently do. The number of participants at training sessions will be kept small to allow for opportunities to build trust and relationships among participants. Understanding the current values among the training group will help the author and her team to more effectively engage participants. Training activities involving peer coaching will help participants to better
understand the values promoted in the literature on trauma-informed care. As participants become more comfortable with their peer coaches (who will be identified as trauma-informed champions) and the trauma-sensitive strategies they learn, the author and her team will support participants to transfer their learning into their work environments through individual consultation (with principal and parent approval as needed). The author and her team will also be available for ongoing consultation to ensure that as participants apply their learning, they experience success and are motivated to continue to integrate trauma-informed practices in their pedagogies both throughout and beyond the change process.

Following the creation and delivery of the training program on trauma-informed practices in school settings, ongoing professional development opportunities, as well as individual coaching and consultation supports will be offered to educators as the change becomes institutionalized (Cawsey, Deszca & Ingols, 2016). The author and her team will be available to consult with administrators regarding policy review as needed. Those in formal leadership positions including the Superintendent of Education, the Manager of Psychology Services and Program Coordinators will promote the integration of trauma-sensitive practices throughout the school board and encourage educators to participate in the professional development opportunities offered by the author and her team.

Data will be regularly collected, reviewed and shared with school board members regarding student attendance, suspensions/expulsions, academic progress and referrals to the school board’s psychological services team and Mental Health and Addictions Nurses. The author will also have training participants complete the ARTIC (Attitudes Related to Trauma-informed Care) questionnaire (Baker, Brown, Wilcox, Overstreet & Arora, 2016; Traumatic Stress Institute, 2019), with approval of the Superintendent of Education, both pre and post-
training to evaluate participants attitudes towards trauma-informed care. This measure will also be offered to administrators who may wish to monitor their school team’s progress throughout the change process. Both staff and students will be encouraged to share their experiences throughout the change process so that the author can learn anecdotally from their experiences both before and after trauma-informed practices are intentionally implemented in school settings.

Positive attitudes towards trauma-informed care, improved attendance and academic achievement records, reduce discipline referrals and referrals to special services, increased educator retention and positive anecdotal reports regarding the integration of trauma-sensitive practices into everyday work behaviours from staff and students will be recognized as indicators that the goal of creating a more trauma-informed school system is within reach.

See Table 1 in Appendix A for a breakdown of the change implementation plan, required resources, stakeholders and budget. Table 1 outlines the change implementation process, including the goals of the change implementation plan, the required resources and who is involved and impacted by the change process. The change implementation process is practical and possible, as it capitalizes on the strengths of the current resources and supports already in place within the school board. It involves all educators, students and community partners in the solution, which is reflective of the school board’s Engagement Model and the inclusive leadership approach it promotes (Organization, 2019). In the following section, the author will further evaluate the change process and articulate how the change will be monitored and maintained.
Change Process Monitoring and Evaluation

Addressing Cultural Context

Cameron and Quinn (2011, pp. 1-26) state that organizational culture is integral to an organization’s performance and long-term success. These authors describe a tool for evaluating organizational culture called the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI). A hypothetical comparison between OCAI now and OCAI preferred completed by this author indicates that changes to the organization’s current culture may be necessary in order to address the POP (Cameron & Quinn, 2011, pp. 27-34). The current hypothetical culture reflects a combination of characteristics from all four culture categories (Clan, Hierarchy, Market and Adhocracy). In order for the school board’s culture to be evaluated more inclusively, the author will need to involve staff from each department within the school board in completing the OCAI. With permission from the Superintendent of Education (Special Education Department Head) and access to the required funds for purchasing the OCAI ($597.00) (OCAI Online, 2019), the author could share the tool virtually with school board staff from each department. The price for the OCAI license is fixed regardless of the number of respondents, so all school board staff could be sent a link to complete the assessment.

It may be useful for the Organizational Cultural Assessment Instrument (OCAI) to be completed by all school board staff before the change process is initiated and periodically throughout the change process if it is perceived to have stalled at any point, as this tool evaluates an organization’s current leadership culture and its preferred leadership culture (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). The clan culture is best aligned with the school board’s Engagement Model and the Trauma-Informed Inclusive Leadership Framework and should be recognized as having the most influence in the OCAI current and preferred culture results. If the results of the OCAI
current culture indicate that the clan culture does not hold the most influence within the school, perhaps some coaching around inclusive and collaborative leadership strategies are needed for those in formal leadership positions within that school. If the results of the OCAI preferred culture suggest that the clan culture is not the most preferred culture type within a school, perhaps the Trauma-Informed Inclusive Leadership Framework for driving the change may need to be re-evaluated to better align with the school’s preferred culture.

Leithwood (2012) emphasizes the importance of school structures, policies, routines and standard practices as they relate to school culture because they can be a significant source of a school’s resistance to change. The OCAI could be used by the author with permission from the Superintendent of Education to better understand each school’s existing infrastructure and culture. The existing infrastructure of a school and its culture exists because it supports that school’s current functioning. Misalignment of infrastructure and culture with the author’s leadership framework for change could significantly erode educators’ motivation to engage in the change process. Understanding each school’s current and preferred culture would help the author to adapt her leadership framework for change to meet each school’s needs. The cost of the OCAI is a flat rate $597.00 regardless of how many members of the school board complete it (OCAI Online, 2019). The author will promote this as a useful tool to for the change process to the Superintendent of Education in hopes that it can be purchased and used proactively and reflectively to improve the efficiency of integrating trauma-informed practices in each school.

**Change Process Monitoring**

The progress of the change implementation process will be measured using the Attitudes Related to Trauma-Informed Care (ARTIC) questionnaire (Baker et al., 2016; Traumatic Stress Institute, 2019), with approval from the Superintendent of Education and administrators at
individual schools. This measure will be implemented before the delivery of the in-house trauma training to attain a baseline measure of staff attitudes towards trauma-informed care. It will also be used after the training is completed to identify any changes in staff attitudes. The ARTIC may be periodically administered throughout the change process to assist in monitoring the sustainability of the change initiative over time. The results of the ARTIC will be used by the author and her team, as well as the Superintendent of Education and the Manager of Psychology Services, to monitor educator attitudes towards the trauma-informed approach and to evaluate the impact of the training and added supports on these attitudes throughout the change process. It will also help the author and her team to better understand the level of urgency for trauma-awareness at individual schools and if a school is ready to develop a trauma-sensitive action plan for change.

Feedback surveys will also be developed to be completed following the in-house trauma training so that the training can be adjusted as needed to best meet the professional development needs of the participating school board staff. This is important because each school and its students have varying needs and unique strategies and supports already in place. In order for the training to be most beneficial to participants, trainers must understand where participants are coming from and what they view as their highest needs. The information collected from feedback questionnaires and the ARTIC will allow the author and her team to begin to tailor their training and supports to fit each participant’s and school team’s requirements. It will also help to inform the author about what actions need to be taken to address staff and student priorities in order to build trauma-sensitivity throughout the school board.
Change Process Evaluation

Individual schools will be encouraged to monitor attendance records, discipline referrals, grades and referrals to special services (i.e. Student Support Team, Psychology Services, Mental Health and Addictions Nurses, etc.) as potential correlational evidence of the impact of implementing trauma-sensitive practices within their schools. The Superintendent of Education will monitor this data and share relevant findings with the author and her team. The author and her team, as well and the Superintendent of Education and the Manager of Psychology services will seek anecdotal accounts from educator and student experiences regarding trauma sensitive practices, which will also be considered when measuring progress towards goal attainment. These anecdotal experiences will help to provide context to the collected quantitative data.

The author will know that the change initiative is progressing well when scores on the ARTIC (Baker et al., 2016; Traumatic Stress Institute, 2019) reflect positive attitudes toward trauma-informed care; when feedback from training surveys indicate that those in attendance feel their professional development needs are being met; when schools report improved attendance records, reduced discipline referrals, improved student achievement, and reduced referrals to special services; and when anecdotal accounts from staff and students indicate positive outcomes related to the use of trauma-sensitive practices within their learning environments. The Superintendent of Education and the Manager of Psychology Services will also be monitoring these outcomes to evaluate whether or not the additional training and supports are meeting the school board’s needs effectively and should be continued and or expanded on, or need to be re-evaluated. If outcomes do not reflect that the change process is progressing well, the author and her team will collaborate with the Superintendent of Education and the Manager of Psychology
Services to review current change strategies and adjust them based on input from other educators and a review of the ever-growing literature on trauma-informed approaches in schools.

**Plan to Communicate the Need for Change and Change Process**

Greenfield (1973), a researcher from the University of Toronto, suggested that organizations are more than structures and are in fact social inventions. He described how “…we must deal with the often conflicting views and values of those acting within these structures…” (Greenfield, 1973, pp. 551) in order to effect change. Greenfield argued that leaders must undertake the task of changing an organization by first considering the variety of realities that organizational members see as existing within the organization. He stated that the transforming mechanism within organizations lies within its individual members. This suggests that rather than placing excessive concern on organizational structures and processes, one must consider the values, goals and motivators of organizational members when designing and implementing a change within an organization. It is likely that many school board staff are motivated to effectively support students who are impacted by trauma, they simply need the leadership and resources to do so.

In order to motivate the Superintendent of Education, the Manager of Psychology Services, school administrators, teachers, support staff and students, the key stakeholders in the change implementation plan, to act to address the POP, the author will endeavor to demonstrate the Trauma-Informed Inclusive Leadership Framework. Inclusive leadership practices align well with the school board’s Engagement Model and also the author's own leadership values and behaviours. In his articles, Ryan (2006; Ryan 2014) describes a framework for inclusive leadership that emphasizes how viewing school leadership practices through a social justice lens allows organizational members to recognize the social injustices in schools. He states that
Educators should become invested in inclusive leadership practices because the divide between the advantaged and the disadvantaged continues to grow and not all students are progressing well within their educational settings. The lack of trauma knowledge in schools is adding to this growing divide. Inclusive leadership involves advocating for inclusive practices within schools by educating organizational members and developing their critical conscience, nurturing open dialogues with an emphasis on student learning and classroom practices, taking a whole school approach and implementing inclusive decision-making and policy-making strategies (Ryan 2006; Ryan, 2014).

Educators throughout the school board have expressed that they lack adequate knowledge of the impact of trauma and toxic stress on their students’ learning and development. Many feel they do not have the capacity to effectively support trauma-affected students to reach their potential. Anecdotal reports from educators throughout the school board and a significant number of requests for professional development on the topic of trauma indicate that there is a desire among members of the school board to learn about and implement a trauma-informed approach to education. By initiating this change process, the author is demonstrating emergent and authentic leadership. The author has shared this call for support with those in formal leadership positions in the form of a proposal to create trauma-informed schools throughout the school board.

Those with decision-making power and access to the required resources have responded in favour of the proposal, a reflection of their inclusive leadership values and their application of the school board’s Engagement Model. Formal school board leaders are in support of the proposed change and have demonstrated that they are ready to take steps towards intentionally building trauma-informed schools. They are looking for ways to reduce work stress and burnout.
and to improve the mental wellness of both staff and students. Approval has been given to the author and her change-leading team of four colleagues from different school board departments to develop a training series on the impact of trauma on student learning and development, as well as effective support strategies that can be implemented by educators. The training will first be shared with formal school leaders (administrators and resource teachers), and then gradually be disseminated to all school board teachers and support staff, including secretaries and custodial staff who also have frequent interactions and important relationships with students. The author and her team have also been given permission to collaborate with other school board members and community agencies to create partnerships that will ease access to services for trauma-affected students and their families.

The school board is currently in the Mobilization phase of the Change Path Model, as a communication plan involving education, participation, facilitation, support and negotiations with other school board members is being enacted by the author and her team (Cawsey, Deszca & Ingols, 2016, pp.53-58). The author and her team have collaborated to create a training series on trauma-informed practices in schools and have met with various special interest groups throughout the school board to present their research and findings in order to gain their support for the change initiative. In these meetings, the author and her team are working to answer the “what’s in it for me question” that many educators have (Vakola, 2014).

Momentum for addressing the POP will continue to be developed during the Acceleration phase, in which the author will collaborate with other school board members to ensure they acquire the knowledge, skills, and mindset needed to support the change as it is enacted (Cawsey, Deszca & Ingols, 2016, pp.53-58). This will help to bolster educators’ confidence in their abilities to make the change successfully (Armenakis, Harris & Mossholder, 1993).
The results of the ARTIC (Traumatic Stress Institute, 2019) will be used by the author and her team to understand where individual school teams and members are at in terms of their attitudes towards trauma-informed care. The OCAI (OCAI Online, 2019) will be administered so that the author and her team can better appreciate what style of leadership and culture exist within school buildings. This will allow the author and her team to adjust the Trauma-Informed Inclusive Leadership Framework so that it aligns well with each school’s needs and collaboration style in order to initiate the change process effectively. Recognizing that each school’s infrastructure and culture will likely be a little bit different, articulating the need for change and the change process using a fairly flexible leadership framework will be important.

Bolman and Deal’s Political frame describes how organizational members may view the POP differently based on their individual values and the priorities of their roles (Bolman & Deal, 2013, pp. 185-204). The school board is made up of coalitions of members with different skill sets and priorities, which can come into conflict. The POP will need to be framed differently based on the values and motivating factors of each individual coalition as the need for change is identified and the plan for change is communicated.

The author and her team will act genuinely and with conviction, demonstrating both self and other awareness (Ko et al., 2018), as this will motivate other educators to engage in the change process (Eisenbeiss & Knippenberg, 2015). The author and her team also have a number of anecdotal stories from their experiences supporting trauma-impacted students and their families. Sharing the challenges they have faced (with consent as needed) and the successes they have had using a trauma-informed approach will hopefully help to build others’ trust in their abilities and expertise. Encouraging other educators to view the challenges they experience supporting trauma-affected students through a critical and a social justice lens using a trauma-
informed approach will also help motivate them to query their way of doing things and be open to safe discussions with the author and her team about new strategies that may lead to improved results.

The author and her team will engage educators and those in formal leadership positions in open, two-way dialogues that allow for individualized consideration and tailored learning opportunities as the change process is communicated and initiated. The author and her team will work to foster trusting relationship with educators so that they feel comfortable reflecting on their current assumptions and practices and taking calculated risks in their attempts to integrate trauma-sensitive practices into their everyday work. The author and her team, along with other school leaders involved in the change process, will continue to demonstrate inclusive and authentic leadership practices, engaging educators in collaborative problem-solving so that they feel their voices are heard and their efforts are recognized throughout the change process.

Timeline

Based on anecdotal reports from educators throughout the school board and a significant number of requests for professional development on the topic of trauma, it is clear that there is a desire among members of the school board to become trauma-informed so that they can respond in trauma-sensitive ways to meet the needs of their students.
Following Cawsey, Deszca and Ingols (2016, pp.53-58) Change Path Model, the author initiated the Awakening phase by creating a proposal to design and deliver trauma training for educators and sharing it with the Superintendent of Education and the Manager of Psychology Services. This proposal was enthusiastically approved in the spring of 2018. The author and her change-leading team of four colleagues from the psychology department and Student Success team participated in trauma training through TLC (the National Institute for Trauma and Loss in Children) in Michigan in July, 2018, (Starr Commonwealth, 2019) and have been informed that there will be room in the Special Education budget for them to attend follow-up training in the summer of 2019.

As part of the Mobilization phase (Cawsey, Deszca & Ingols, 2016, pp.53-58), the author and her change-leading team worked collaboratively to create a three-part trauma training series for educators which was completed on October 1, 2018. The trauma training series was reviewed.
by colleagues from the Special Education Department on November 5, 2018, and was approved for delivery by the Superintendent of Education and the Manager of Psychology Services on December 3, 2018. The first trauma training series began on January 10, 2019. The three-part trauma training series will be delivered five times across three school board locations by June 28, 2019. This training is anticipated to reach a minimum of one-hundred school board employees by June 28, 2019, and will continue to be offered throughout the 2019-2020 school year (dates to be determined). Condensed versions of the training will be delivered at individual schools upon request. The author and her team will also provide ongoing consultation and support to educators on an individual basis upon request with principal, and as needed, parent consent, to help trauma-informed champions to integrate their learning into practice.

The author and her team met with the school board’s Mental Health Lead on November 22, 2018, and periodically after that to review community agency supports. They are also in communication regularly via email, Google Docs and telephone. As part of the Acceleration phase (Cawsey, Deszca & Ingols, 2016, pp.53-58), the author with her team and the Mental Health Lead created a resource guide outlining available community supports which was completed on January 24, 2019. This resource guide was shared with the Superintendent of Education and the Manager of Psychology Services for review and was approved for sharing on February 4, 2019. The resource guide is now posted on the Staff Resources page of the school board’s website and is being shared with educators who participate in the in-house trauma training.

As part of the Institutionalization phase (Cawsey, Deszca & Ingols, 2016, pp.53-58), the ARTIC (Attitudes Related to Trauma-informed Care) questionnaire (Baker et al., 2016; Traumatic Stress Institute, 2019), with approval of the Superintendent of Education and school
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administrators, will be administered approximately once every five months across three years (until June 2021) to assess educators’ attitudes towards trauma-informed care. Data including attendance records, academic achievement records, discipline referrals, referrals to special services, and anecdotal reports from staff and students will be analyzed as well. Positive attitudes towards trauma-informed care, improved attendance and academic achievement records, reduce discipline referrals and referrals to special services, increased educator retention and positive anecdotal reports regarding the integration of trauma-sensitive practices into everyday work behaviours from staff and students will be recognized as indicators that the goal of creating a trauma-informed school system is within reach.

**Required resources**

The resources provided by the Superintendent of Education include: the cost to attend the TLC training for all training facilitators ($450.00 Canadian each (Starr Commonwealth, 2019), plus mileage ($0.55 per kilometer) and each participant’s wage); access to conference room space in both board offices and in schools (with principal approval) (included in the school board’s Building/Maintenance budget; access to photocopying and paper supplies (roughly $40.00 per training session); travel costs for all training facilitators ($0.55 per kilometer); the OCAI ($597.00 flat rate) (OCAI Online, 2019); the ARTIC ($500.00 for up to 600 respondents) (Traumatic Stress Institute, 2019); flexible time within the training facilitators’ regular work schedule to create and deliver the trauma training; support from the Special Education Department secretary to create an online sign-up for the training and to monitor the waitlists; access to members of the Special Education Department to participate in a one day run-through of the trauma training to access feedback from peers; and invitations to participate in School Multidisciplinary Team meetings and Principal meetings to promote the trauma training. For a
further breakdown of the budget and financial obligations of the change process, see Table 1 in Appendix A.

The Superintendent of Education has stated that there will be budgetary funds to allow this author and her four change-leading team members to continue to participate in trainings offered through TLC to keep them well-informed about new trauma knowledge. The support and encouragement from the Superintendent of Education and the Manager of Psychology Services makes achieving the goal of the change implementation plan realistic and achievable.

Next Steps and Future Considerations

Potential Challenges

One significant challenge in delivering the trauma training to all school board staff is that there is no money in the budget for release time, so educators must voluntarily sign up to participate in the training in the evening hours after the school day has finished (4:00 p.m. -6:30 p.m.). This is difficult for a lot of educators who have other commitments after school, may be travelling some distance to the training locations, or who may simply be too tired to fully participate. Some principals have requested trainings be delivered in their school settings during staff meetings. There is a possibility of providing a version of the training during school meetings; however, it would need to be greatly condensed given the time allotment provided during school-based team meetings.

Another challenge relating to the trauma training being voluntary is that it may not reach some of the educators who could really benefit from it, as the training may not fit their value system or beliefs about what their role as an educator entails. Hopefully with some mentorship from trauma-informed champions and other leaders within their buildings, they will be encouraged to participate in the training, especially after observing the anticipated success that
trauma-informed champions will have in supporting some of the more challenging students within their buildings.

A third challenge regarding training delivery will be supporting the trauma-informed champions to transfer their learning from the contrived environments of the training sessions to their work environments and maintain their use of trauma-sensitive strategies over time. The author and her team will be available to consult with and support educators in their individual work settings following the training as they begin to purposefully build trauma-sensitive strategies into their day-to-day interactions at school. This consultation and support will be delivered upon request from educators with principal, and as needed, parent approval. It will also be dependent on the change-leading team members’ work schedules.

Connecting students with community agencies may also be difficult as there is a fairly limited number of community-based support agencies available to students in the school board’s district, especially in the more rural communities. Developing and sustaining community partnerships and supports will likely require some advocacy from school board leaders and some creative problem-solving with community partners.

Gaining buy-in to the plan for change from school leaders and motivating them to support their staff in integrating a trauma-informed approach to their work is attainable but may be challenging in certain cases where school leaders need to adjust their existing mindsets. Through participation in professional development opportunities, such as the in-house trauma training; the receiving of encouragement and direction from those in superior leadership positions, such as Superintendents; observations of colleagues experiencing success when implementing trauma-sensitive strategies; and practicing and observing one’s own success with trauma-sensitive strategies, changes in mindsets are likely to occur. In order for the change to be truly attainable
and sustainable in any school, it must be supported and encouraged by the school’s leader(s) (DeMatthews, 2018; Ryan, 2006; Ryan, 2014; Wang, 2018). Therefore, it will be essential to gain principal buy-in to the vision for change. School leadership also changes fairly frequently, so the author and her team, with the support of the Superintendent of Education and her colleagues, will need to continue to emphasize the value of trauma-informed approaches to student learning and development and clearly articulate the importance of these practices to the achievement of individual school goals and to the school board’s mission.

**Future Considerations**

As the school board is a publicly funded institution, its budget, curriculum directives, policies and procedures are subject to change based on the current government, making it difficult to engage in long-term planning. For example, the recent change in provincial government from a Liberal leadership to a Conservative leadership has already brought about changes in curriculum policy and funding for schools (Alphonso, 2018). In order to ensure the promotion of trauma-informed practices throughout the school board over time, it will be important for the author and her team to keep up with and share the research regarding the impact of these practices on the outcomes that matter most to decision-makers, such as academic achievement, graduation rates, staff retention, etc.

The author and her change-leading team, with the consent of the Superintendent of Education, may wish to share the data they collect regarding the impacts that implementing a trauma-informed approach has throughout the school board with other school leaders (e.g. the Director of Education), leaders from community partner agencies and government representatives in order to advocate for the continued allocation of resources to provide trauma-informed supports within schools. Other school boards may also be interested in how this school
board integrates a trauma-informed approach to education, so having a strategy for sharing the challenges and successes experienced throughout the change process may be needed.

**Conclusion**

Jacob Ham, a clinical psychologist and trauma guru described a trauma-sensitive school as akin to a group of mama elephants watching over their baby elephants and protecting them in order that they might enjoy the freedom that comes with feeling safe as they learn and play (Ham, 2017). It is the author’s hope that through the implementation of this change plan, the school board will empower its educators to act as the mama elephants do, creating safe spaces and caring relationships in which students grow and thrive. As educators learn how a number of the strategies they intuitively demonstrate are already having a positive impact on trauma-affected students and begin to integrate new trauma-sensitive practices into their pedagogies, trusting relationships will continue to form and be reinforced between them and their students. This will positively impact student outcomes, as well as educator job satisfaction (Carello & Butler, 2015; Perry & Daniels, 2016; Phifer & Hull, 2016; Walkley & Cox, 2013). The trauma-informed approach to education will begin to become intrinsically reinforcing for both educators and students and will hopefully become best practice in all school settings in time. This will allow for the realization of a sustainable, trauma-informed approach to education throughout the school board, bringing the school board that much closer to achieving its mission and vision of fostering the success of every student, every day (Organization X, 2019).
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## Appendix A

### Table 1

*Change implementation process: Goals, resources, budget and stakeholders.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals/Priorities</th>
<th>Implementation Process</th>
<th>Supports/Resources</th>
<th>Budget/ Financial Obligations</th>
<th>Stakeholders/ Personnel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Create an in-house trauma training series for educators    | • The author and four colleagues from different disciplines within the Special Education Department will participate trauma training through TLC (Starr Commonwealth, 2019).  
• The author and her team will collaborate to create training focused on what trauma/toxic stress is, how it impacts the brain/body functions and learning, what it looks like in the classroom, and evidence-based strategies for supporting trauma-impacted students.  
• Training series will be reviewed by colleagues in the Special Education Department. | • The training through TLC (Starr Commonwealth, 2019) has been approved and paid for by the Superintendent of Education through the professional development budget within the Special Education Department.  
• A number of peers from the Special Education Department have volunteered to participate in a one-day run-through of the training to help review it.  
• The author and her team have been granted extra flexibility in their work schedules to collaborate on this project and are able to access space at either board office or in schools (with principal approval).  
• Presentation creation tools (e.g. laptop, | • $450.00 per training participant (Starr Commonwealth, 2019), plus mileage to and from training sessions ($0.55 per kilometer) and wages (varies based on role) (Organization X, 2019).  
• Roughly $200.00 for printed resources. | • The author and her team.  
• The Superintendent of Education.  
• The Manager of the Psychology Department.  
• Peers from the Special Education Department. |
| Department before receiving approval from the Superintendent of Education and the Manager of Psychology Services. | PowerPoint, access to the internet, printed resources, etc.).  
- The Manager of Psychology Services is available for consult as needed. | The in-house trauma training series will be delivered to at least one educator from each school within the school board.  
- The author and her team will attend School Multidisciplinary Team Meetings and Principals meetings with the approval of the Superintendent of Education to promote the trauma training series. This promotion will reach every principal and resource teacher within the school board, as well as a number of teachers/support staff who are members of the multidisciplinary teams.  
- With the support of the Special Education Department Secretary, an online sign up for the training series will be created and opened on the staff website under PD Place. Any school board member | The Superintendent of Education and her colleagues are promoting the training within the schools they support and emphasizing its importance in supporting the school board to achieve its mission.  
- Condensed versions of the training can be offered within schools by principal request dependent on the team’s work schedules.  
- The author and her team plan to donate snacks during the training to help with keeping participants engaged and energized.  
- The author and her team are well supported by their supervisors and are approved to adjust their work schedules as needed to allow time for training preparation and delivery.  
- At least one member of the team will be | The cost of presentation space is covered by school board’s Building/Maintenance budget. Custodial staff are already scheduled for duty after hours and so no extra cost will be incurred.  
- Educator participation in training is voluntary and so no cost is incurred.  
- The cost of presentation tools is covered by the Special Education Department’s resource budget and will include photocopies, post-it notes, high lighters, markers, pens and snacks. This is estimated to cost roughly $75.00 per training session. | The author and her team.  
- The Superintendent of Education.  
- The Manager of the Psychology Department.  
- Educators from every school within the school board. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Educators will begin to integrate trauma-sensitive practices into their interactions with others (staff and students) in their schools, acting as trauma-informed champions and leading others from</strong></th>
<th><strong>Throughout the training, homework activities will be assigned to participants to encourage them to try recommended trauma-sensitive strategies within their classrooms. These</strong></th>
<th><strong>The author and her team will be available to provide individual consultation and support as requested by educators with principal and, as needed, parent approval, dependent upon their work schedules.</strong></th>
<th><strong>The cost to use the ARTIC, which is roughly $500.00 for up to 600 respondents (Traumatic Stress Institute, 2019).</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>may sign up for the training series and waitlists will be created as needed.  • The training series will be offered five times across three different school board locations. The trainings will be offered one evening a week (4:00 pm – 6:30 pm) for three consecutive weeks (given there are no weather-related cancellations).  • Feedback questionnaires will be created to be completed following the training so that adjustments can be made as needed to best meet the needs of training attendees.</td>
<td>responsible for making sure that they get a thumbs-up from anyone leaving the training (e.g. for a washroom break). If a thumbs up is not received, they will connect with that individual to check in with them and ensure they are okay. All members of the school board also have access to the Employee Assistance Program if needed.  • The author and her team have access to photocopying and paper resources, as well as presentation technology and space within either board office or schools (with principal approval) given that the space has not already been booked.</td>
<td>The author and her team.  The Superintendent of Education.  Educators and administrators throughout the school board.</td>
<td>Mileage ($0.55 per kilometer) and wage of clinician or team member (varies based on position).  Cost of the OCAI which is $597.00 flat rate (OCAI Online, 2019).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<tr>
<th>activities will be discussed at the follow-up training session to problem-solve as needed and deepen the participants’ understanding of why these recommended strategies are effective.</th>
<th>The author and her team will promote the use of the OCAI as a useful tool for measuring each school’s current and preferred culture to those with budgetary authority (Superintendent of Education, Principals, etc.). The information gathered with the OCAI will allow the author to better understand each school’s unique infrastructure and culture so that the author’s leadership framework for promoting the change may be adjusted as needed.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Follow the training series, the author and her team will be available upon request by educators who participated in the training to provide individualized consultation and support with principal, and as needed, parent approval.</td>
<td>• The author and her team will promote the use of the ARTIC as a helpful tool for measuring the change towards developing positive attitudes towards trauma-informed care and adapting trauma-sensitive practices in schools to those with budgetary authority (Superintendent of Education, Principals, etc.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• School administrators will be encouraged by their supervisors as well as the author and her team to promote the use of trauma-sensitive strategies within their buildings.</td>
<td>• Students throughout the school board.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
reflectively by the author with Superintendent and Principal approval to evaluate the current and preferred culture of each school. This will allow the author to better understand each school’s unique infrastructure and culture so that the author’s leadership framework for promoting the change may be adjusted as needed.

• The ARTIC will be administered, with Superintendent and Principal Approval, periodically to assess educators’ attitudes towards trauma-informed care, so that the author and her team may better understand when and where further intervention is needed.

• Educators and students will be encouraged to share their experiences regarding the implementation of

• Millage for travel between schools to provide training, consultation and support is covered under the author and her team members’ contracts and paid through the Special Education Department’s budget. Each member of the team has a vehicle and valid driver’s license.
| • The author and her team with the support of the school board’s Mental Health Lead will connect with community agencies who provide counselling, medical and other related youth supports to establish and strengthen partnerships to ensure ease of access to community supports for trauma-impacted students and their families. | • The author and her colleagues will consult with the school board’s Mental Health Lead regarding which community agencies offer relevant supports for trauma-impacted students and create a resource guide outlining these agencies, their services and their contact information. | • The Mental Health Lead will reach out to these community agencies to discuss their referral processes and how the school board might partner with them to ensure ease of access to their services for our | • There are already existing partnerships with a number of community agencies that the Mental Health Lead reconnect with to confirm what services they provide and how these services can be accessed. | • Each school has access to different local charities that they can reach out to with the support of the author, her team, or the Mental Health Lead, to help cover certain cost barriers to trauma-impacted students (e.g., access to grocery cards). | • Mileage ($0.55 per kilometer) and wage of clinician, team member and or Mental Health Lead (varies based on position). | • The author and her team. | • Educators and administrators throughout the school board. | • Students throughout the school board and their families. | • Community agencies (mental health services, health services, shelter services, etc.). | • The Special Education Department secretary. |
trauma-impacted students and their families.

- The author and her colleagues will share the community partner agency resource guide with those who attend the in-house trauma training series and as needed with those they support in schools. This resource guide will also be posted on the Staff Resources webpage with the support of the Special Education Department secretary.

- The resource guide will be reviewed every five months by the Mental Health Lead to ensure it remains up-to-date and relevant to our students and their families’ needs.

| The author in collaboration with the nine other psychoeducational clinicians working for the school board will deliver presentations to | The Mental Wellness presentation was developed by members of the Psychology Department and updated this year (September 2018) to better align with the | The Mental Wellness presentation already exists and is being promoted and delivered by members of the psychology department. 
With principal approval, teachers will need to provide the space and | Mileage ($0.55 per kilometer) and wage of clinician. | The author and the ten other members of the psychology department, including their manager. 
Administrators and educators |
| students on the topic of Mental Wellness, to promote a better understanding of the impacts of stress and resiliency skills. | MindUp curriculum (The Hawn Foundation, 2011) being promoted by school board leaders.  
• The author and her psychoeducational clinician colleagues will promote the presentation to administrators and teachers in the schools they support. Teachers who wish to have their class participate in the presentation will inform their school’s clinician who will then partner up with one of her colleagues to deliver the presentation to the class.  
• Students will be able to ask questions during the presentation and to connect individually with their school’s psychoeducational clinician following the presentation with principal, and as needed, parent consent. | time for presenters to deliver their message to the students.  
• Psychoeducational clinicians provide one-on-one supports for students in need of healthy coping strategies and resiliency skill development under the supervision of the Manager of the Psychology Department with principal, student, and, as needed, parent consent. | throughout the school board.  
• Students throughout the school board. |
experience of stress and healthy coping strategies.
- Presenters will model trauma-sensitive strategies throughout the presentation.