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Frame-bending quality: Leading through discourses towards equity and student success

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Abstract

In 2018, the Government of Ontario introduced a post-secondary accountability framework that attributes up to 60% of colleges' annual public funding to the achievement of ten government-directed performance outcomes. The new framework's shift from the previous enrollment-based funding model intensifies neoliberal and post-structural policy discourses of quality and accountability, further relegating social inequities to the margins of post-secondary education. At the same time, burgeoning social movements have appealed to governments and post-secondary institutions to dismantle systemic barriers that impede students from equity-deserving communities from accessing and flourishing in college. This Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP) explores how a large urban college can reconcile neoliberal and post-structural representations of quality to develop a strategic approach to improving college-level outcomes that advances equity and promotes student success. Managing inherent tensions between government-defined quality and the college's moral obligations to advance equity and promote student success is conceptualized using a hybrid social justice framework through lenses of moral leadership, transformative educational leadership, and tempered radicalism. Examining leadership through these lenses produces a proposed solution that reorients quality by organizational frame-bending and situates individual and organizational leadership practice towards equity and student success with tempered radicalism. Continuous negotiation of neoliberal and post-structural representations of quality is deliberately discussed as a means through which leaders and the organization can engage in an ongoing process of praxis and sensemaking to navigate an increasingly complex and competitive post-secondary terrain.

Keywords: higher education quality, equity, student success, social justice leadership, tempered radicalism, neoliberalism.

Executive Summary

As post-secondary institutions across Ontario contend with a new government accountability framework that attributes up to 60% of annual funding to achieving ten performance outcomes, Metro College is also striving to propel the organization towards its mission to “turn learning into opportunity” (Metro College, n.d.). With the launch of a new strategic plan in 2020, Metro College (a pseudonym) has committed to focusing inward to enhance key organizational capabilities that will help position the organization for long-term success. Among these capabilities is a focus on academic excellence and the optimal student experience, as dialogic underpinnings to the college’s strategy and plans for the future. As the college evolves in its capacity to “create the optimal conditions for learners to realize their success by offering an exceptional ecosystem” (Metro College, n.d.), neoliberal discourses of accountability for quality in post-secondary education are intensifying. This has surfaced tensions between the public policy view of post-secondary education quality as economically instrumental, and calls from equity-deserving communities and burgeoning social movements to establish a new paradigm for quality — one that seeks to dismantle systemic barriers to equity and college student success. With historical roots in access and community, and a demographically diverse student body (Metro College, n.d.), the Problem of Practice (POP) for Metro College, then, is how to approach improving college-level outcomes in accordance with government policy, in a manner that authentically advances equity and promotes student success? The Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP) explores the POP in three chapters.

Chapter 1 provides an overview of Metro College’s history, values, and strategy. The OIP author, who is also positioned as the change leader, situates the POP within the contexts of critical theory (Freire, 1970), transformational leadership (Burns, 2010; Kezar, 2018), and tempered radicalism (Meyerson, 2001). By framing the POP within discourses of governmentality (Bacchi & Goodwin, 2016),

accountability policy, and student success literature, questions emerge relative to: Metro College's need to negotiate complex and often conflicting discourses of quality, equity, and student success; to the organization's role in reproducing dominant neoliberal representations of quality; and how the college can enact leadership approaches to solve a problem that is both technical and social. Calling upon internal organizational change drivers including: a commitment to advancing equity, the new strategic plan, and a new leadership coalition, Chapter 1 sets the stage to explore leadership and change frameworks that will produce potential solutions to the POP.

Chapter 2 focuses on framing change and change planning by situating the neoliberal problem of improving quality outcomes for financial reward, within a critical and post-structural leadership context that foregrounds the construction of equity and student success at Metro College. Using Rottman's (2012) framework for social justice, the dialogic relationship between moral, transformative, and tempered radical leadership is explored across three leadership levels at the college: the discursive level with the college being part of a larger post-secondary sector with a social contract to the public good; the organizational level as expressed through the objectives and priorities of the new strategic plan; and the individual level of leadership actors who share collective responsibility for quality, equity, and student success. Using organizational frame-bending (Nadler & Tushman, 1989) as a framework for reorienting Metro College's work towards quality, as well as Rottman's social justice framework, three solutions to the POP are analyzed to help the college realize improved quality outcomes in alignment with the public policy. The proposed solution suggests a measurable quality framework that integrates variables relating to equity and student success as a means to improve college-level outcomes — both to the economic benefit of the organization, and to the benefit of its social responsibility to its stakeholders and to the communities it serves.

Chapter 3 maps a strategic path forward for change at Metro College. Given the author's leadership agency and senior role in the organization, the change implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and communication plans are intentionally strategic and focus on enabling leadership capacity of senior directors and managers in the organization. The path forward also suggests that the process of developing the shared framework is just as important as the product itself. College leaders have signalled a readiness to embrace new ways of working that will deconstruct historically vertical barriers to organizational success. At the same time, the process of developing a social justice self-concept is vital to the change plan's success, given that those who hold power in the organization do not necessarily reflect the same diversity of social identity in students and other stakeholders. As a result, the author positions tempered radicalism (Meyerson, 2001) and the cultivation of social justice allyship as a leadership tool for humanitization (Freire, 1970) and leadership sensemaking (Kezar, 2018) for leaders to authentically advance equity and promote student success.

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When I think about how to acknowledge those people who have supported me through this experience, doing so in the introductory pages of a manuscript that they may or may not actually read seems insufficient. However, in reflecting upon their roles in shaping this piece of scholarly work, there seems to be no better place to express gratitude than right here.

I am grateful for my parents, who were the first in their families to emigrate over 50 years ago and paved the way for many others to do the same. Their unshakeable belief and confidence in my potential have guided me through my academic and professional career in ways that I never imagined. They taught me to be fearless in taking risks, to be courageous in asking questions, to always try seeing things from other perspectives, and to speak up when things just aren't right. They have instilled in me a fervent belief in the power of my truth, and perhaps more importantly, in keeping that as the most powerful ordinal in my career and in my life.

I am grateful to my sister, who, as a dedicated educator for over 25 years, has dared to demonstrate love, compassion, and courage in her teaching. She reminds me that every student matters, and that our moral responsibility as educators is to champion those students who may not yet grasp the extent of their potential. This calling is even more critical for us when working with learners who move through the world facing down a system that was never designed for them to have the chance to succeed. Her compassion for others and her love of teaching inspire me every day.

I am grateful to my brother, who passed away unexpectedly just as I sat down to write the first pages of this manuscript. He bought me my first three books on change leadership when I first started my career, jokingly saying that they would "make people think you're smart." While he never once doubted that himself, he more importantly taught me that every person deserves to be seen, to be heard, and to feel like they are the funniest and most important person in the room.

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Definitions

Co-curricular: describes non-credit bearing college activities, which often occur outside of formal academic curricula, and which provide complementary opportunities for students to gain knowledge, skills, and capabilities for their overall success. It is commonly used instead of *extra-curricular*, which connotes the additive rather than complementary nature of these experiences.

Equity-deserving groups: a phrase used to broadly describe groups who have faced historical and systemic barriers to success due to discrimination on one or more dimensions of social identity and diversity.

Neoliberal: describes an ideology that asserts the value of economic instrumentality and market-based logics as a means to ensure maximum creation of wealth, which subsequently establishes an ideal quality of life for all (Simpson, 2018). The ideology centres efficiency, rationality, and sameness, which are values that “have become a desirable and appropriate framework for any and all areas of social interactions, including government, public policy, the family, education, and the individual” (Simpson, 2018, p. 188).

Persistence: a measure of students continuing to pursue their studies continuously at college, within any academic program and on either a part-time or full-time basis. The term centres agency within the individual student/learner, as opposed to the institution.

Post-structural: describes an ideology that rejects “the possibility of any kind of universally valid knowledge” (Hammersley, 1995, p. 14) and positions knowledge as being relative, relational, and

reflexive. The term is used to refer to a wide landscape of ontology and ideology that includes post-modernism and critical theory.

Publicly-funded / publicly-assisted: The former signifies a point in time when colleges and universities received most of their funding from government. The latter marks more current policy where post-secondary institutions generate more than 50% of their annual revenues.

Public good: refers to “an ethical and relational concern for community well-being and for justice . . . directly contrasted to a privatized, competitive, and economic prioritization of efficiency and individual gain” (Simpson, 2018, p. 122).

Retention: a measure of a student being continuously enrolled by the college in the same program of study into which they were originally admitted. The term centres power and influence with the institution, as opposed to the student/learner.

Social identity: refers to how the self is defined as a member of a larger enduring social group, based on that group’s relation to the prevailing dominant culture or hegemony. Social identity sets the individual apart from the dominant culture and is a basis for seeing the self as different from that culture rather than rather than being excluded from that culture. This sense of difference can also be expressed in terms of philosophical differences that conflict with prevailing values and ideologies operating within their communities.

Student affairs and services: represents a broad group of professional and administrative functions within a post-secondary institution, which support students in their psychosocial, career, and academic development.

Student success: broadly describes the favourable outcomes for students in college. It can be defined and quantified in multiple ways, often by organizationally determined outcomes such as course completion, program completion, and graduation. It can be equally subjectively defined by individual students concerning their specific personal goals that may not relate to academic achievement.

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Problem of Practice

In 1967 the Ontario college system was established to fulfill the government's promise "to provide thorough education and training . . . an equality of opportunity to all sectors of our population to the fullest development of each individual to the limit of his ability" (Ontario Department of Education, 1967, p. 5). One year later, Metro College¹ opened its doors to 2000 students to become part of an interdependent network of 24 colleges in this new sector of the province's *publicly funded* post-secondary system — founded to build Ontario's economy through career-focused education. In the 52 years since, Metro College's enrollment has grown to over 30,000 students in over 170 programs of study (Metro College, n.d.), while building community, industry, and the economy in one of the world's most demographically diverse cities.

Metro College has deep roots in democracy, justice, and access. The college's namesake was an ideologue and founder of one of the country's most prominent national newspapers, through which he challenged abuses of power in prison systems, denounced state support of religious institutions, and government corruption (Careless, 1972). Known as a "paragon of progressivism" (Coyne, 2017), he helped to create the Anti-Slavery Society of Canada, which sought to end the practice of slavery across North America, and he advocated for equitable representation and reform in Canada's political system (Careless, 1972).

Honouring its namesake's fervent belief in the importance of democracy, free expression, and accessible public education, Metro College was launched in 1968 through the amalgamation of two provincial trade institutes and their five urban campuses (Metro College, n.d.). The college has since expanded its academic program offerings to serve the broadest range of industries represented in Canada's largest city. Even with diversified programming in hospitality and culinary arts, business, design

¹ Metro College is a pseudonym used throughout this manuscript to facilitate anonymization.

and information technology, health sciences and community services, preparatory and liberal studies, and construction and engineering, Metro College's roots in social justice and equity shine through. Arguably, the college's historical foundation in democratic movements associated with labour, anti-oppression, and community development amplifies its role as a major city-builder and a symbol of access to opportunity through post-secondary education.

Organizational Context and Commitment

Along with the 23 other *publicly-assisted* colleges in Ontario, Metro College is regulated by a single act of the legislature that governs colleges as agents of the Crown (*Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology Act*, S.O. 2002). The Act charges the college's Board of Governors with the authority and responsibility for ensuring that colleges fulfill their legislated mandates under regulations and binding policy directives (Government of Ontario, 2010). Further, the Act indicates that colleges exist:

To offer a comprehensive program of career-oriented, post-secondary education and training to assist individuals in finding and keeping employment, to meet the needs of employers and the changing work environment, and to support the economic and social development needs of their local and diverse communities. (*Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology Act*, S.O. 2002, Section 2)

Unlike publicly-assisted universities, each of which have stand-alone acts of the legislature that grant them greater governing autonomy and financial agency in fulfilling their mandates, the province's colleges are more tightly coupled to the government and its policies as non-profit Crown corporations. Colleges can be expected to be immediately responsive to and accountable for evolving government policy and priorities, leaving them less individual autonomy to pursue organizational interests in the same way as the province's universities or private for-profit career colleges. At a sector level, colleges are represented by an advocacy association that promotes the colleges' critical role in the economy, champions policy measures to strengthen quality, and facilitates coordination and collaboration among

the 24 institutions (Colleges Ontario, n.d.). Further, Metro College is among many organizations that share degree articulation agreements with public universities, in addition to credential pathway programs from private career colleges. Within the overall provincial post-secondary landscape, colleges represent an accessible entry point through which learners can explore educational and career goals with mobility and flexibility.

In order to fulfill this role, many of Metro College's academic divisions have expanded and diversified their programming to appeal to both domestic and international students, marking a shift away from being a traditional community college². With the introduction of the *Post-secondary Education Choice and Excellence Act* (2000), Metro College began to grant degrees in 2003, in addition to its already robust offering of certificates and diplomas. The college has diversified credential offerings to include post-graduate certificates for students who have already attained an undergraduate university degree, as well as pre-college programs for people who do not have the required secondary school education for a credentialed program of study. This range of programs is offered amid its commitment to accessible career-focused skills development (Government of Ontario, 2020b), which also ensures that 100% of the college's programs include at least one experiential learning opportunity, as well as offering over \$8-million in annual scholarships and bursaries based on financial need (Metro College, 2020).

Organizational Aspirations and Values

With a mission to “turn learning into opportunity” (Metro College, n.d.), Metro College strives to “create the optimal conditions for learners to realize their success by offering an exceptional learning ecosystem” (Metro College, 2019b, p. 20). Using a “collaborative and innovative mindset” (2019b, p. 20),

² Community college is not used as frequently to describe the province's publicly assisted colleges, as their role has expanded significantly beyond serving the only the immediate community.

the organization endeavours to realize its transformational impact to “empower lifelong learners who imagine possibilities and embrace change” (2019b, p. 20). The college’s widely-embraced set of *LEAD* values, “Learner-centred, Excellence, Accountability, and Diverse & inclusive” (2019b, p. 27), are long-standing benchmarks for the college in building its relationships with students, industry, and the local community.

Central to the college’s vision and mission, the *LEAD* values were established in the early 2000s as powerful ordinals in the organization’s “path to leadership” (Metro College, n.d.). These core values are significant aspects of the college’s culture as they “‘work’ in the sense of reducing uncertainty in critical areas of the [college’s] functioning” (Schein, 2004, p. 29). Their relevance is noticeable as they surface frequently in important organizational artifacts including policies, course outlines, annual reports, organizational planning templates, speeches, job postings, offers of employment, print materials, and websites. Even with these values widely represented across the organization, Metro College is not unlike other institutions in that the ways in which values are expressed and enacted can appear to be complex and contrasting (Birnbaum, 1998). This is further complicated by the fact that the representation of organizational values can vastly differ among academic disciplines and administrative structures, and among stakeholders from diverse backgrounds and experiences who work and learn within them (Kezar, 2018). However, amid this complexity, Metro College continues to maintain focus on its *LEAD* values, and to strive for ongoing organizational congruence that will allow the college to engage more deeply in change processes and realize future transformation (Amis, et al., 2002).

Organizational Strategy

Metro College achieved many of the objectives in its previous 2010-2020 strategic plan, which aligned with five key priorities: student experience; innovation in teaching and learning excellence; access and equity; applied research excellence and impact; and innovation, economic development, and community engagement (Metro College, n.d.). During this period, the organization experienced

significant enrollment growth and related financial stability — with enrollment almost doubling since 2005 (Metro College, n.d.). To achieve this financial objective, college divisions implemented operating plans that did not always systematically correlate to measures of the college’s overall strategic objectives, but addressed the needs of students, industry partners, and employers. This practice produced distinct sub-cultures within the college, with an internally entrepreneurial approach to planning and strategy, which is reinforced through a decentralized budget model of revenue generation and spending. The budget and planning model incentivized this relatively siloed approach, with college leaders’ performance and compensation hinging on achieving division-level goals and revenue targets, which were driven by set financial contribution targets to the overall college budget. Even though many unanticipated successes were realized, the internally loose coupling of divisional operations and organizational strategy resulted in minimal improvement to college-level outcomes (Metro College, 2018). Further, many strategic initiatives failed, particularly those intended to improve student retention, due to lack of focus and college-level goal orientation, unclear use of organizational processes and technologies to measure and correlate outcomes, and fluid participation of leaders to build organizational capacity and scalable strategic impact (Metro College, 2018). Metro College is an organized anarchy (Cohen & March, 1986), and not unlike many other post-secondary institutions insofar as its “goals are either vague or in dispute . . . technology is familiar but not understood . . . [and] major participants wander in and out” (p. 3). This can make organizational change challenging, but not impossible, and necessitates a close examination and potential reframing of the organizational mission and vision to realize strategic impact (Manning, 2018).

Given this historical approach and culture, Metro College’s academic divisions have independently developed their own community character, defined by *their* students, their curriculum, their faculty, and their industry partners, producing distinct identities and cultures within the college. As a result, the seven academic divisions operate as if they are seven colleges within a college. While

service and resource duplication proliferated, students faced barriers to internal mobility and transferability of their experiences, and college-level outcomes remained relatively static (Metro College, 2018). This generated organizational confusion and sometimes divergent accountabilities, making college-wide goals and strategies unclear and difficult to grasp. The unintended outcome was the creation of organizational siloes, reinforced by the drive for academic divisions to grow enrollment revenues so that Metro College could compete in a growing post-secondary marketplace.

Strategy 2030

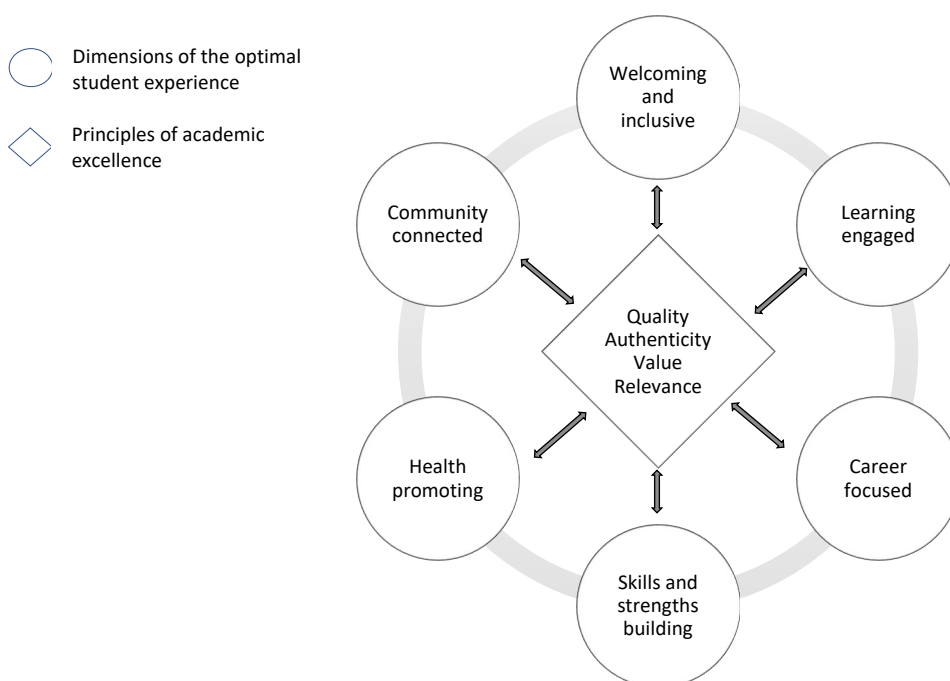
In 2018 the provincial funding and accountability context for colleges shifted, and to meet organizational goals, the college acknowledged that a highly-coordinated and collaborative strategy was needed for the future. In its vision for 2030, Metro College strives to be “bold and transformed” (Metro College, 2019b, p. 21), a future state supported by seven key aspirations. The strategic plan envisions that the Metro College of 2030 is “highly personalized; physical, digital and experiential; focused on lifelong learning; connected to industry and community partners; locally strong, globally connected; differentiated; and resilient” (Metro College, 2019b, p. 21).

Conceptual Underpinnings. The college’s transformational aspirations are underpinned by a commitment to shared “principles of academic excellence” and “dimensions of the optimal student experience” (Metro College, 2019b, pp. 22-23) as the foundation to mobilize the organization towards its vision. By grounding its vision and strategy in these commitments, Metro College’s future-focused plan prioritizes learners and the totality of their college experience as being foundational to organizational success. This was no accidental outcome, as the college’s senior leaders — including the president; four vice-presidents; chief finance, information technology, and government relations officers; and seven academic deans — examined internal data and debated the centrality of these critical underpinnings to the college’s strategy.

Reaffirmed through extensive community consultations with over 6500 participating students, employees, alumni, and industry and community partners, Metro College has now committed to these interdependent conceptual frameworks (see Figure 1) as a catalyst to bring all areas of the organization to a focused understanding of the pathway to organizational success.

Figure 1

Conceptual Underpinnings of Metro College's Strategic Plan



The purposeful integration of these frameworks across the implementation and measurement of the strategic plan will help dismantle the college's historical siloes and move progressively and collaboratively towards a whole-college transformation.

Commitment to college-wide success.

Metro College's Board of Governors and senior leadership team are deeply committed to delivering on the college's strategic commitments in the next 10 years to optimize student and organizational success outcomes (Metro College, 2019b). Amid an increased public policy emphasis on

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and government-mandated quality outcomes as the basis for funding, it is vitally important for Metro College to strategically align its internal goal-setting, planning and evaluation processes to ensure the optimal expression of its vision. The new strategic plan creates a short-term three-year strategic focus to enable the organization to optimize its internal resources and collective capabilities so that it can undertake bold transformation in the years to follow. As such, it is critical that the interplay of the four principles of academic excellence and six dimensions of the optimal student experience strongly anchor the organization's goals to realize the broadest expression of its vision to turn learning into opportunity, and which signify indicators of quality and success.

Metro College has also committed to boost its capacity as a learning organization — to leverage data, to engage in research and evaluation, to improve performance outcomes, and to spark innovation (Metro College, 2019b). Specifically, one of the college's commitments is to “enhance data-driven decision making with analytics . . . to optimize how we work, teach, and learn” (Metro College, 2019b, p. 33). The underpinning principles and dimensions signal criteria against which the college can plan and measure its transformational impact, specifically to optimize college-level quality and success outcomes. With the future end-state well in sight, Metro College has strategically positioned itself to embrace change, and to collaborate meaningfully to impact student success and overall college-level outcomes.

Leadership Position and Lens

Recognizing that the college had not realized significant improvements in college-level outcomes in its last strategic plan, including not having achieved a five percent increase in student retention (Metro College, 2018), the senior leadership team was re-configured in 2018. In this organizational restructuring process, a new vice-presidential portfolio was established to focus the organization on student success, and to lead the college towards improved student outcomes. Led by the Vice-President, Student Success (VPSS), the restructuring strategically aligned student affairs and services departments across the college, including those that provide personal support, promote co-

curricular student engagement, and many academic support services. Further, the VPSS holds accountability for strategically orienting the college's policies and practices relating to student persistence and graduation, and as such has a high degree of influence on the development and quality of Metro College's academic program offerings.

As the first person to hold this leadership role at Metro College, the author is uniquely positioned with both the leadership mandate and agency to work across the organization as a change champion and leader to optimize and improve student success outcomes. The role is evolutionary in nature, such that the VPSS does not work within the parameters of a defined job description, but instead is expected to leverage leadership skills and relationships to deliver on objectives and priorities as detailed in the college's strategic plan. Internal leader and stakeholder relationships that are critical to the role's success are in continuous development, and the organization's current context is evolving relative to its foundations for success over the next three years. Therefore, leadership flexibility, adaptability and focus are essential to success for the VPSS as a change leader.

Leadership Lenses

Over the course of the change champion's ³ career, critical theorists, anti-oppression workers, and educational scholars have reaffirmed a worldview that is strongly oriented towards social justice and equity. As a result, his work as a scholar-practitioner emerges from an interplay between critical pedagogy, transformation, and tempered radicalism. This is a vitally important asset to the VPSS role as a change leader, as it foregrounds the social, organizational and knowledge capital that he has acquired through his own diverse social identities, advocacy and social justice allyship for students, and over 20

³ The author self-identifies as a white cis-gendered gay man, who is a first-generation Canadian and a first-generation post-secondary graduate, who experiences disability-related barriers. The author's pronouns are he/him/his.

years as a student affairs professional. The relational nature of this diverse leadership capital will allow the change champion to undertake a unique approach to lead towards equity and justice within the senior leadership team and across the college.

Critical Theory

Liberation theology most significantly underpins the VPSS' work as a leader-scholar, through an ontology of humanization (Freire, 1970) — a process of becoming more fully human — that liberates people into a new consciousness of being. This new critical consciousness is enacted through *praxis*: the ongoing process of “action and reflection . . . upon the world in order to transform it” (Freire, 1970, p. 79). This process helps people from oppressed and equity-deserving populations become more completely who they already are as human beings (Mayo, 1999; Schugurensky, 2011). Roberts proposes that Freire's philosophy is “an ontology of restlessness” (2016, p. 1), characterized by a continuous search for new knowledge and meaning in the world. For Freire, this restlessness foregrounds education as being fundamental to humanization, which in turn, builds collective capacity among people and communities to overcome interlocking systems of power and oppression. Praxis deepens the oppressed people's understanding of the world and drives the transformation of how individuals name and make meaning of the world around them (Roberts, 2016). Freire problematizes capitalism and neoliberalism by proposing a universal human ethic (Freire, 1998a), that emphasizes an ethic of care that is enacted socially among people in society, rather than an ethic of self-interest and utility that is operationalized by commodifying knowledge as an instrument of the economy. This worldview surfaces through ongoing dialogical problem-posing within the lived experience of the learner, such that “learning is constituted and organized by the student's view of the world, where their own generative themes are found” (Freire, 1970, p. 109). This positions teachers and educators as cultural workers (Freire, 1998b), whose role is to attend to critical pedagogical virtues of love, humility, openness, respect, and a willingness to listen — a role that Freire proposes is revolutionary for social change (Freire, 1970).

The change champion's identity as a scholar-practitioner has further been shaped by other critical scholars (Foucault, 1977; Gilligan, 1982; Giroux, 2001; hooks, 1994), whose work have reinforced his sense of a calling as a leader-educator to name and move beyond traditional power structures and systems of the educational organizations within which he works. As an advocate for students and their success, he views social conflict as constructive, and as a productive space for critique, understanding, action and social change. Considering leading and learning as a mutually inclusive practice, he further values leadership action through intention, which requires grounded opportunities to reflect upon leadership relationships in order to "surface and criticize the tacit understandings that have grown up around the repetitive experiences of a specialized practice and make new sense of the situations of uncertainty or uniqueness which [we] may allow [ourselves] to experience" (Schön, 1983, p. 61).

Transformation

Burns (2010) emphasized that the transformational leader "looks for potential motives in followers, seeks to satisfy higher needs, and engages the full person of the follower" (p. 4). In so doing, the leader creates space for a reciprocity of values, actions, and outcomes in relationships through which leaders and followers "act for certain goals that represent the values and motivations . . . of both" (Burns, 2010, p. 19). Recognizing the power relations between leaders and followers, transformational leadership renders real a process where leaders and followers mutually increase their motivation and morality such that it "[raises] the level of human conduct and ethical aspiration . . . [having] a transforming effect on both." (Burns, 2010, p. 20). This leadership view surfaces opportunity for dialogue about change that facilitates both greater understanding and "[fleshes] out differing values and interests . . . [and] the potential for bringing about more ethical outcomes" (Kezar, 2018, p. 37). Further, transformational leadership "begins on people's terms, driven by their wants and needs and must culminate in expanding opportunities for happiness" (Burns, 2003, p. 230). Doing so has the potential to

deconstruct and disempower the traditionally held binary of leader-follower that is broadly upheld in higher education organizations.

Tempered Radicalism

The change champion's lived experience and social identity (see Footnote 2) is critically important to his work as a senior leader in the college. While he can consciously perform whiteness and maleness as a cultural insider to hegemonic typologies of organizational leadership, he does so with the lived experience and values of an outsider (gay, first generation, person with a disability). This insider-outsider fluidity allows him to enact leadership and influence for social change. Meyerson (2001) proposes a leadership theory of tempered radicalism that "represents a special case in which the values and beliefs associated with a professional or organizational identity violate values and beliefs associated with personal, extra-organizational, and political sources of identity" (Meyerson & Scully, 1995, p. 587). Within this approach, change can be enacted in two ways: "through incremental semi-strategic reforms, and through spontaneous, sometimes unremarkable expressions of authenticity that implicitly drive or even constitute change" (Meyerson & Scully, 1995, p. 594). By leveraging small wins, localized and authentic action, fluidity of insider-outsider language, and establishing affiliations (Meyerson, 2001), the tempered radical motivates a continuous transformation and meaning-making process for organizations to undergo significant change. As such, the tempered radical is comfortable with organizational ambiguity and fluidity, particularly in a change process. This is an approach that aligns with the evolving agency and scope of the VPSS role within the organization, and fortuitously echoes the leadership approach undertaken by Metro College's namesake.

Leadership Identity Confusion

Part of the leadership challenge for the change champion arises from his orientation towards critical, post-structural approaches to educational leadership. Specifically, he views educational leadership as a responsibility to critique discourses, structures and actions that reinforce interlocking

systems of capitalism and privilege, especially in organizations that endeavour to improve the quality of life for individuals and the communities they inhabit. He disagrees that post-modern and post-structural models of leadership “have become marginal . . . because they offer few clues as to how leaders are supposed to operate” (Bush, 2015, p. 40). Instead, the change champion asserts that these models are maligned because they inherently seek to disempower structures and systems of capitalism that many western typologies and theories of leadership and organizations inherently reproduce — and that fundamental quest does in fact offer obvious clues as to how leaders should lead.

As a leader, the VPSS accepts that these systems and structures are the same ones that he has navigated as a white man over the course of a successful 20-year educational leadership career. An essential question then arises about how to advance college goals, objectives, and strategy, such that they engender organizational resiliency (Mellow & Talmadge, 2005). In leading through social change at Metro College, the VPSS will need to reconcile how he engages in a gendered performativity (Butler, 2011) of leadership, and how his orientation towards “tempered radicalism” (Meyerson, 2001) plays a part in his mobility as an “operational insider. . . who represents ideals that are somehow at odds with the dominant culture” (p. 5). He will also need to contemplate how, to realize successful organizational change in a complex organized anarchy, Metro College will respond to a hybrid model of leadership and change such that the project is scalable and promotes organizational resiliency (Lane et al., 2013).

Leadership Problem of Practice

Over the past five years, government-mandated KPIs at Metro College have remained relatively stable, with metrics of student and graduate satisfaction, student retention, and graduate employment rates all hovering just below the average for the province’s 24 publicly assisted colleges (Colleges Ontario, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019; Metro College, 2018). Given their representation of quality within government policy (Government of Ontario, 2010), these indicators are considered as significant benchmarks of the quality of the student experience and are a substantial mechanism for the college’s

overall public accountability profile. With reliance on revenues from students through tuition, ancillary fees, and other fees to support approximately 66% of its \$420-million annual income (Metro College, 2019c), it is vital to improve these indicators and their associated college-level outcomes. At the same time, provincial legislation and social movements to advance access and success for post-secondary students, particularly for those from equity-deserving communities, has driven Metro College to critically examine policies, programs, and practices that shape and impact college-level outcomes and student success. With bolstered leadership capacity through the VPSS, the college has a new strategic vision of the student experience as a means to enhance quality and outcomes for students and the organization. With this in mind, the leadership Problem of Practice (POP) is situated at the intersection of multiple discourses of *equity*, *quality*, and *success*, and amid the negotiation of neoliberal policies (Busch, 2017) that can contend with higher education's historical and contemporary cultural purpose: to realize a learner's full potential as a means to contribute to the public good (Dewey, 1961; Simpson, 2018).

However, with recent shifts in public policy emerging from a 2018 change in provincial government, greater percentages of base government funding to colleges will be inextricably tied to new economically-derived KPIs of education, which can overshadow historical ideologies and values such as access and equity — both of which are represented in Metro College's LEAD values and organizational culture. These values have allowed colleges to hold a unique place in the public education ecosystem and afford a competitive advantage in an increasingly fluid public-private post-secondary marketplace that is constantly responding to internal and external influences (Busch, 2017). Despite this, current public policy aims to push economic outcomes, the new calculation of which does little to incentivize organizations to advance educational equity, quality, and student success. In the new policy regime, output rates, graduate starting salary, and economic impact are the new markers of quality.

In some ways, Metro College's leadership is in a crisis of conscience. Given the current policy climate, should the organization strive towards the greatest possible expression of its values in order to better the lives of its diverse students and communities? Or should Metro College focus on producing marketized representations of quality to sustain funding in an internally competitive and highly-marketized public educational sector? Representations of quality and the pathway to its realization can be complex and conflicting, and the lack of congruence therein could hinder the organization's capacity to realize its ambitious vision to turn learning into opportunity. The challenge facing the organization's leadership, then, is to reconcile competing representations of values and interests that shape equity and influence quality, to strive towards an organizationally congruent vision of student success that is both sustainable and progressive within the context of current policy. To that end, the POP addressed in the Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP) will be: With the goal of improving college-level outcomes, how can college leaders develop and implement a strategic, values-based quality framework to advance equity and to promote student success?

Framing the Problem of Practice

In framing the POP, it is important to understand the contexts and discourses of quality, accountability, and student success. Even within these sometimes-competing discourses, organizational work to promote college student success has entrenched economic and employment outcomes as indicators of quality. This emphasis on neoliberal representations of educational quality (Busch, 2017) has arguably minimized the significance and complexity of student learning and development as foundational college-level outcomes.

Governmentality and Quality

Bacchi and Goodwin (2016) describe *governmentality* as "a particular form of government . . . in which the security, reproduction, productivity and stability of the 'population' are concerns of the state" (p. 41). Relative to quality, one can see governmentality represented amid the echo of the provincial

economic downturn of the 1990s, when the then-Conservative provincial government sought to reduce public spending and increase accountability among public sector entities. With a goal to overcome the negative impacts of deficit spending, the government introduced tax cuts and austerity measures across the province, de-regulated post-secondary tuition, and introduced a 14.3% cut to post-secondary funding — economic conditions that eroded the province’s reputation for excellence in post-secondary education (Martin, 2009). At that same time, the government introduced performance-based funding incentives for the province’s publicly-assisted colleges and universities, providing an accountability lens through which students and their parents, as consumers, could account for “the ability of [Ontario’s] colleges and universities to successfully place graduates in jobs” (Brownlee, 2015, p. 46). *Performance*, as a practical text of quality, was represented through the introduction of KPIs for: graduate and employer satisfaction; graduation rates; current student satisfaction; and retention rates. Colleges have since been motivated to perform favorably against these accountability metrics, through modest financial incentives and public reporting of annual KPIs. This practice created further competition across the post-secondary sector amid growing demographics of prospective college students (Clark et al., 2011).

In 2005, the subsequent Liberal provincial government commissioned a review of post-secondary education, with a goal to provide advice on system design, accountability, and funding, with secondary recommendations on internationalization and marketing. The report suggested that “the enthusiasm for ‘greater accountability’ should not become a synonym for more government control . . . the federal and provincial governments have a clear responsibility to ensure that [they do not] become too heavy-handed or too intrusive” (Rae, 2005, p. 16). The review recommended that the province formalize its accountability by establishing common standards and measurements and stated that “improvements in the student experience [should] include the area of student services” (p. 30). This drive towards enhanced quality through performative accountability was realized in a new legislative

framework, the *Governance and Accountability Framework* (Government of Ontario, 2010), which mandated public reporting of measurements as a tool for public accountability and transparency of colleges as crown corporations.

This report marked an important moment in the history of post-secondary education in Ontario. It reflected a Liberal government policy that aspired to restore quality in an education system that depreciated tax cuts and over-spending by previous governments. The report catalyzed action among the province's colleges and universities to improve performance in both internal and external markets, as the recommendations were characterized as having "an extensive and enduring impact on Ontario's students, their parents, our universities and colleges and the faculty and staff that constitute them . . . [and] the greatest impact will be on the province's well-being" (University of Toronto, 2004, p. ii). In other words, the most significant effect being how higher education conceptualized its duty to the public good.

Accountability and Funding Policy

Annual planning and budgeting in the province's colleges are subject to the legislation and directives of the province's Ministry of Colleges and Universities (MCU). Since the early 2000s, a funding model that rewarded enrollment expansion and credential diversification across the province motivated unprecedented growth and internal competition in the sector (Clark et al., 2011). This complicated the competitive landscape for the province's college sector, as provincial policy allowed colleges to grant degrees and diversify their credential mix as a mechanism to promote student mobility and credential completion (Government of Ontario, 2000). In many ways, the perceived historical lines between colleges and universities blurred, signalled by the proliferation of diploma to degree articulation agreements, the emergence of college-university collaborative programs, and the centering of applicant choice and applicant conversion as key drivers to strategic enrollment management in the province. These moves reinforced the internally competitive nature of post-secondary education in the province.

At the same time, enrollments across Ontario's colleges grew by 22.3%, yet public funding decreased by approximately 10% (Usher, 2018), despite a funding model that rewarded growth. The most significant constraining variable for colleges over this period was the steady decline in provincial funding, as compared to the province's universities, which was disproportionately low relative to increasing enrollments (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2017). However, during the first 15 years of this mandate, Metro College's enrollment grew by 38%, making it one of the largest colleges in the country. This growth period prompted increased government accountability, thereby tightening the already complex political coupling of colleges and the provincial government. Accountability was enacted through four primary college-level mechanisms: Multi-Year Accountability Agreements (MYAA); annual business plans; cyclical program review; and annual reporting of KPIs — much of which were made publicly available for consumer market comparison.

Funding reform

Accompanying the pre-2018 sector growth mandate, the government introduced incentive-based funding against KPIs in a mechanism to facilitate transparency and motivate benchmarks of college graduate employability. The *Governance and Accountability Framework* (2010) legislated colleges to measure their performance and publicly report annually "in relation to key provincial objectives" (p. 4) as represented by annual KPIs and provincial financial aid default rates, all of which arguably measured organizational efficiency more so than educational outcomes or effectiveness. Funding incentives for favourable performance against these metrics were distributed in addition to the base-funding, as calculated according to the college's full-time equivalent headcount. Metro College's performance against these KPIs earned a modest share of an additional \$16.4 million per year that was distributed across the sector (Forum Research, n.d.). Additionally, up to an additional six percent of a college's annual revenue was eligible for funding through an incentive for favorable student retention rates alone (Donner & Lazar, 2000). For Metro College, these incentives were nominal relative to the

college's overall revenue profile. However, the metrics used to determine them were vitally important in terms of public reputation and marketability, which subsequently influenced how colleges conceptualized quality and success as marketable objects in a diverse educational sector. As such, this increase in public accountability for declining public resources reinforced the neoliberal shift in higher education policy and practice that favours higher education competition and marketization as an economic benefit to individuals over its contribution to the public good (Busch, 2017).

In anticipation of a projected decline in people pursuing post-secondary education across the province, the post-secondary funding formula shifted in 2016 following a government consultation on funding model reform (Government of Ontario, 2016). The new formula evolved from one that broadly promotes sector-wide growth, to one that seeks to enhance the quality of student experience, support differentiation, increase transparency, and promote financial sustainability (Government of Ontario, 2016). While the new formula still allows for strategic and measured enrollment growth, it attempts to stabilize spending in the sector by allocating annual funding according to a defined enrollment corridor calculation for each institution. This means that Metro College's base public funding will not vary over the life span of its new Strategic Mandate Agreement (SMA)⁴ with the province, provided that the college's annual enrollment is strategically managed within the defined corridor, and on the condition that the government continues to endorse the funding model despite potential changes to the political party in power. As such, Metro College will have to rely more heavily on alternate revenue sources, including student tuition and ancillary fees, to ensure its financial stability into the future.

⁴ The Multi Year Accountability Agreements (MYAA) were replaced by Strategic Mandate Agreements (SMA) and require that colleges and universities articulate their strategic objectives and address government priorities as a condition for receipt of funding.

After this change in the funding model, a new Conservative government was elected in 2018 who further amplified the new framework by introducing significant economic accountability measures. In addition to accountability through SMA and program quality assurance reviews, the newly elected government introduced a dramatic change to performance-based funding where, by 2024, up to 60% of Metro College's annual funding will be tied to success outcomes as expressed through 10 college-level metrics (Government of Ontario, 2019a)⁵. This practice continues to reproduce managerialist interventions in public education, and further reinforces corporatized outcomes as representations of quality. KPIs position students and their parents as consumers, and not necessarily learners, and arguably misrepresent the complex nature of quality and success in post-secondary education. The new framework drives colleges to prioritize accountability for economic *outputs* of education over learning and success *outcomes*, and in so doing, attempts to navigate a shifting policy environment to “play the game of neoliberal competition” (Busch, 2017, p. 31) in higher education.

Understanding Student Success

Early research on retention (Heilbrun, 1965; Rose & Elton, 1966; Summerskill, 1962) attributed individual student retention to intellectual and adaptive abilities — essentially centering the responsibility and capacity for student success on variables that are within the locus of control of the individual student. Tinto (1975) later recognized that retention and success were subject to variables beyond individual psychology, and he questioned the validity of psychometric and typological approaches to student success. As a result, his further retention research proposed a sociological model (Tinto, 1987) that is widely accepted as foundational to college student success. Tinto proposes that student commitment shapes academic engagement and social integration behaviours, and that this commitment warrants a corresponding commitment and integration response by the institution. This

⁵ These metrics are detailed more fully in Chapter 2. See Appendix A.

corresponding commitment, he argues, is operationalized through curriculum, policy, culture, environment, and other organizational variables that shape the conditions for students to persist and succeed. Even though institutional commitment is contextual, as it “springs from the very character of an institution’s educational mission” (Tinto, 1993, p. 146), it is the responsibility of colleges and universities to create ecosystems that are conducive to learning and the development of the whole student (Strange, 2000; Strange & Banning, 2001).

Beyond academic engagement and the psychology of the student as a learner, student involvement both in and out of the classroom became more understood and accepted as a predictor of student retention and success (Astin, 1999). Further research by Astin (1993) emphasized that outcomes of student involvement outside of the classroom, through experiences such as campus leadership and community engagement, were linked to the desirable social-good outcomes of a college education. These social-good outcomes include well-being, health, social trust, and engaged citizenship (Easterbrook et al., 2016). These links are further strengthened when engagement in activities outside of the classroom are grounded in student learning outcomes, which align with either or both of the student’s academic curriculum and that of the social and community good (co-curriculum) (Elliott, 2009; Finelli, et al., 2012; Haber & Komives, 2008; Whitt et al., 1999). This further amplified the benefits of co-curricular involvement as a predictor of retention (Tinto, 1987) and strengthened the connection between college completion and promoting the public good. Further research on the connections between student success and engagement reinforced deep curricular and co-curricular connections as significant variables in facilitating retention, persistence, and success (Kuh, 2001; Mayhew et al., 2016).

There are common characteristics among colleges with favorable persistence and retention rates including: clearly articulating expectations of success; showing students how and when to engage with institutional resources; acculturating students to their new environments and experiences; facilitating personal connections with peers, faculty, and staff; and communicating what the college

values (Kuh et al., 2005). Similarly, policies and practices that promote these characteristics, combined with a related organizational ethos of continuous improvement (Kuh et al., 2005; Whitt et al., 2008) are critical to student retention and success. This ethos of continuous improvement as an institutional condition for student retention is further reinforced by Dietsche's research on Ontario colleges: "the responsibility for initiating efforts to improve student retention falls within the jurisdiction of college administrators and involves the policy decision to implement a comprehensive and coordinated program of institutional research" (1990, p. 81).

With a particular focus on the transition to college, further research on student success generated the widely-shared understanding that the college student experience can be stressful and challenging. Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) noted the emergence of negative psychosocial and health behaviours (e.g., smoking, drinking, presentation of mental illness) as responses to the stress environment, and as predictors of attrition. The psychosocial impacts of the environment can be more complicated for students from equity-deserving communities in particular, whose social location can disadvantage them in negotiating and navigating the college environment and experience due to having limited social capital (Attinasi, 1989; Strayhorn, 2010) to cope with and respond to the stress environment.

Research limitations have foregrounded the extent to which the intersectional expression of student social identity dimensions (e.g., race, gender, disability, Indigenous ancestry, sexual orientation) is a significant factor in predicting student success. Colleges and universities reproduce significant systemic barriers that are completely outside the locus of control or influence of the student, which limit the extent to which students can access the social capital, resources, and supports that are critical to success in college. These barriers have reproduced historical achievement gaps for students from under-represented or equity-seeking groups (Carter & Weiner, 2016; Noguera, 2006; Portelli et al., 2007; Shah, 2018).

While some colleges and universities have provided focused services and programs through diversity offices, specific equity-related responsibilities, expectations, and outcomes across all organizational stakeholders are necessary to reduce systemic barriers to student success (McGrath, 2010). Supporting students across these often-intersecting identity domains can be complex and resource-intensive, and colleges have often struggled to do so effectively due to declining resources. This has motivated activism and advocacy from internal and external post-secondary stakeholders for the government to enact policy changes to widen access and inclusion. However, this is a challenging proposition for the post-secondary sector, as “re-orienting [*sic*] the post-secondary education system to accommodate new types of learners will not be an easy task . . . since academic systems are steeped in tradition and highly resistant to change” (Kirby, 2009, p. 4).

Guiding Questions Emerging from the Problem of Practice

Considering the context of the POP, questions guiding the analysis and change plan emerge at two points of reconciliation. The first point relates to reconciling prevailing policy with organizational perspectives and discourses of quality, how they reproduce marketized micro-representations of accountability, and how they enact power relations in Metro College’s organizational context. The second point of reconciliation relates to how these discourses enact leadership values and practices among the college’s leadership from which a common framework for student success may be established.

First of all, the diverse discourses of quality must be questioned in order to explicate their origins and their connection to the POP. Examining quality as an object of policy is a complex task, as quality takes on different meanings depending on the audience for whom, and the context in which, it is operationalized. Harvey and Green’s (1993) early work on defining quality in the era of Total Quality Management (TQM) in higher education illustrates not only this complexity but also its “benchmark relativism” (para. 9), in that it is subject to no identifiable threshold but rather to the processes that

produce outcomes and to “that which is good and worthwhile” (para. 13). They propose that “quality can be viewed as exceptional, as perfection (or consistency), as fitness for purpose, as value for money, and as transformational” (para. 14). As such, for the purposes of the POP, an underlying question may in fact be: how does Metro College define, understand, and measure quality?

Further to questioning the definition of quality, how various discourses of quality reproduce quantified micro-representations must also be explored. Are these reproductions purely performative for the sake of ensuring organizational sustainability? Are they governmentalized representations of power that limit or amplify Metro College’s capacity to deliver on its mission? Or are they representations of “a force that says no, but . . . traverses and produces things” (Foucault, 1977, p. 119)? Alternatively, are these micro-representations rendered technical such that they are part of a governable domain, and can be managed within Metro College as an organization (Li, 2011)? Are these renderings an efficient means of making the complexity of quality intelligible? Exploring these micro-representations and their related neoliberal and post-structural discourses will help guide college leaders through the change implementation in articulating and advancing a quality framework for organizational and student success.

In addition to a deeper organizational understanding of quality, questions arise regarding the standpoint from which leaders enact its objects and representations, and how related individual and stakeholder perspectives and values are reflected in the organization’s work. Critical social justice leadership (Ryan & Rottman, 2007) helps orient the change champion’s leadership framework — both as scholar and as practitioner — in working towards a common vision of student success. However, that is his standpoint alone, as one leader within the organization. The diverse leadership perspectives among senior leaders and those involved in change implementation will then need to be examined. How do personal values and moral languages (Nash, 2002) that shape individual perspectives on post-secondary education influence leadership approaches to the POP? How do representations of leadership among

stakeholder groups and disciplines within the college influence how the organization understands and enacts its leadership capacity in the OIP? In what ways can diverse leadership voices and discourses harmonize to operationalize a new framework for organizational and student success at Metro College?

With that considered, the fluidity of leadership values as reflections and representations of certain ideas and ideologies, and as valid leadership actors unto themselves, complicates the challenge for the college to operationalize a singular path towards student success. While certain discourses may be contextually privileged over others, as signalled by prevailing public policy, questioning the discursive interplay itself may produce new objects and understandings of quality that will allow the college to be resilient in turbulent and uncertain times — today and into the future.

Leadership-Focused Vision for Change

The college has acknowledged that historically differentiated approaches to teaching, learning and student experience, have not significantly improved college-level outcomes. An internal report on student retention (Metro College, 2018) revealed several variables that prevented the college from realizing significant changes in these important measures of student success. The report found that:

1. There is inconsistency in the resources, technologies, and outcomes through which past efforts to improve the student experience have been undertaken by academic divisions and administrative units.
2. Data from student satisfaction questionnaires and course evaluations revealed a wide range of student experience issues and challenges that contributed to negative student perception and attrition.
3. Limited evaluations from divisional and departmental retention initiatives to promote student satisfaction revealed a range of promising practices that were piloted in various areas of the college, but to a limited degree of success.

Overall, the review of the college's past retention initiatives found that since these efforts were neither coordinated, nor anchored in a common conceptual framework, their scalability and potential to significantly shape college-level success outcomes was limited.

To that end, the new strategic plan proposes an end-state for the student experience that cultivates whole student success at Metro College. The conceptual model of the six dimensions of the student experience (see Figure 1) proposes that all the college's learners are unique, and that their needs and experiences cannot be singularly represented by one typology, one approach or one intervention. Instead, the framework puts forth the idea that six common dimensions exist within the individualized context of the student's experience — to varying magnitudes and frequency — and that it is the college's responsibility to enact the conditions through which these dimensions can be optimally experienced by the student. This is intended to occur relative to the student's individual priorities, needs, goals and desires, which can be dynamic over the course of the entirety of the student life cycle. The approach underpins lessons learned through student success literature, evidence from internal promising practices, and feedback from students as to what they expect of their college experience. Therefore, the college's strategy aspires to a future state where students experience these dimensions in a manner that is amplified by the principles of quality, authenticity, value, and relevance — consequently creating the conditions for optimal college-level outcomes.

Internal Change Drivers

Whelan-Berry and Somerville (2010) propose that change drivers can be those that drive the need for change, and those that facilitate the implementation of change. The previous examination of discourses of quality frame the external forces that drive Metro College to change. However, understanding the internal drivers that will facilitate change implementation is needed.

Advancing Access and Equity

Arguably, how quality and success are operationalized is shaped by the human diversity of the college community. Metro College symbolizes an entry point for many students and their families to a larger system of public support services and structures that build connections and partnerships between students, their families, and their communities (Metro College, 2019c). As such, expectations of how the college supports students are far-reaching.

The diversity of the college student body has been consistent over the past five years (Metro College, 2019c). However, the power relations between the organization and its students have become more complex. Social movements such as those relating to anti-Black racism, Indigenous rights, and campus sexual violence, have drawn attention to the systemic barriers faced by people from equity-deserving groups, and have also amplified college-level accountabilities through legislation and sector policy. This has forced Metro College to raise the bar on how it provides targeted and specific supports to students from these communities. This is in addition to already-existing requirements to support students with disabilities, first-generation students, and Indigenous students — which have long-standing accountability obligations that are precariously tied to annually renewable government funding envelopes. Furthermore, with 28% of the student population coming to Canada on a study permit (Metro College, 2019c), the income generated by international student tuition is significant, and the needs of this student population cannot go unacknowledged.

This amplification of the needs of diverse students, and the call for greater access and equity, forms a significant change driver that will push the organization to engage more broadly and more equitably with students to support their success. However, doing so is also essential for competitive advantage in the marketplace. Metro College is one of five colleges in the metropolitan area — all of which are among the largest in the province. Further, it is surrounded by four universities, including two of the country's largest research-intensive institutions. The competition for students is fierce, and with

the diversification of credentials offered by colleges and universities, and their collective focus on preparing students for the future of work, Metro College has no choice but to differentiate itself in how it supports and engages students. As such, the importance of how the college supports students and optimizes their experience becomes clear.

New Strategic Plan

In preparation for the forthcoming “decade of change and unknown disruption” (Metro College, 2019b, p. 12), the college has set out four strategic commitments to be realized in the next three years as a foundation for success. These commitments include:

- delivering learning experiences that prepare learners for the future and develops global skills;
- building interconnected partnerships with institutions, industry, and community;
- [raising] the standard of the learner experience and expanding the variety of delivery models;
- and [focusing] on fundamentals to help anticipate, absorb, and manage change (Metro College, 2019b).

In combination, these four commitments form the foundation upon which the vision for the future of Metro College will be built. They are inward-focused and, given the complexity of this change, afford the organization the next three years to reconfigure its internal systems and structures so that it can move forward confidently towards 2030.

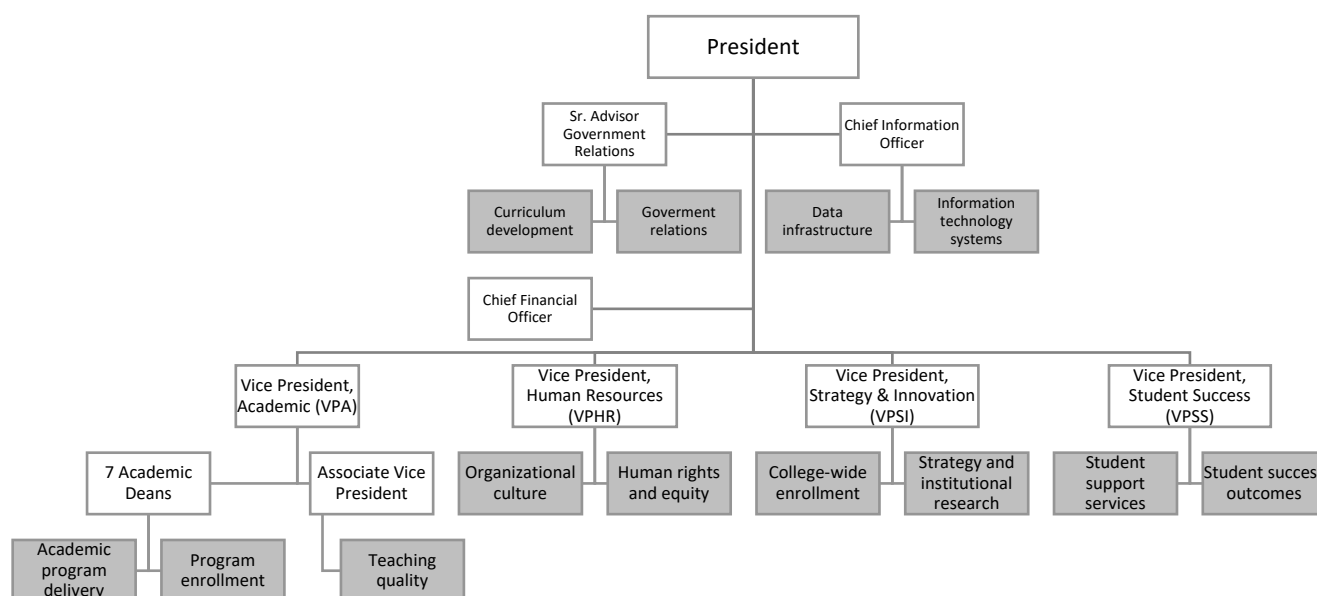
Evolving Leadership Relationships

With the creation of the new VPSS, the college signalled the critical importance of a strategically coordinated focus on the broadest range of the student experience, and the programs and services that support student success. This work cannot happen in isolation alone, as variables that impact student success are complex and diverse. Therefore, the leadership relationships among the VPSS, and other

senior leaders (specifically the Vice-Presidents Academic; Human Resources & Organizational Development; and Strategy & Innovation) are critically important to advance the college's aspirations of being truly learner-centred. Figure 2 illustrates the college's organizational structure relative to leadership roles and strategic responsibilities relative to the POP.

Figure 2

Metro College Senior Leadership Structure



Note: Shaded boxes indicate areas of leadership responsibility relative to the POP.

This evolving leadership structure and paradigm has created new accountabilities for other senior leaders across the organization, including those responsible for administrative and academic units, whose work was otherwise self-contained and focused only on the immediate needs of their division, its students, and the industries it serves. For example, while the academic deans report directly to the Vice-President, Academic (VPA), they have an informal accountability to the VPSS for retention

and persistence. His work is also enacted in close partnership with enrollment services, information technology services, strategy and planning, and marketing and student recruitment — functions that all report through to the Vice-President, Strategy and Innovation (VPSI). Further advancing this work in new and innovative ways requires building the competencies and capabilities of the college's employees, and within the college's responsibilities for equity and human rights — all of which are within the domain of the Vice-President, Human Resources (VPHR).

The interdependence among these four vice-presidents, all of whom have been in their roles for less than five years, has heralded a new normal for leadership collaboration at the college, and created a leading coalition (Kotter, 1996) through which organizational siloes can be deconstructed, and the organization can move forward strategically, together.

Organizational Change Readiness

The level of engagement of the students, employees, and other stakeholders in the creation of the college's next strategic plan is a favourable indicator of Metro College's readiness for change. The strategic plan was enthusiastically launched in August 2019, with extremely positive feedback from employees across the organization who were eager to see a new vision for the future (Metro College, 2019d). Survey results from hundreds of employees who participated in the launch indicated that there was a clear understanding for the need to transform; that employees believed in the strategic direction; that there was renewed confidence in organizational leadership; that the plan was consultative and not created in a vacuum; and that individuals saw themselves and their priorities reflected in the strategic plan (Metro College, 2019d). This feedback affirms the factors proposed by Armenakis et al. (1999) as indicators of the college employees' initial readiness to embrace the change and transformation proposed in the new strategy.

However, enthusiasm and eagerness to change are insufficient on their own to sustain critical momentum, and since the launch of the plan, the details of how to change, and the sequencing of

priorities, have become clear. As senior college leaders have come together to establish and map key priorities, the need to address the diverse range of understandings and perspectives on quality and success has emerged. Questions have surfaced about how the college will measure its success, what the desired outcomes will be, and how the organization will ensure that it is going about its transformation in the *right way* — so as to preserve its long-standing values and ideals. Therefore, the senior leadership team's readiness for change in working towards a congruent and values-driven quality framework for student success will need to be carefully cultivated.

Assessing Change Readiness

The readiness for change questionnaire (Cawsey et al., 2020) allows the change champion to explore the senior leadership team's readiness across six dimensions: previous change experiences; perceptions of executive support; credibility of leadership and champions; openness to change; rewards for change; and accountability measures. The champion's subjective assessment of readiness in relation to these dimensions is not intended to be an absolute determinant of permission for change, but rather to serve as a point of leadership reflection, assessment, and evaluation throughout the change implementation processes in the OIP.

Previous Change Experiences

Given that the college did not fully realize the student success related goals and objectives of its previous strategic plan but did increase enrollment and other internally-defined success outcomes (Metro College, 2018), there is a cautious optimism to change in general. While senior leaders openly acknowledge that change is necessary, there is a common belief that the need for change exists externally to individual leaders and their respective divisions or departments. This belief arises from the independent approaches in the past to goal setting, planning, and evaluation, and the reinforcement of organizational siloes. Rather than singling out areas that pose specific problems or deficits, the leading coalition of vice-presidents has worked over the past two years to establish a partnership and strengths-

based approach to the college's vision, that honours both the individual character of divisions and departments and draws them together as an interdependent collective. Further, the reinforcement of core LEAD values in the new strategic plan preserves key organizational artifacts and representations that allow leaders to still see the possibility of a new future for Metro College.

Executive Support

Advancing a new framework for quality that will positively influence college-level outcomes is directly within the leadership mandates of both the VPA and the VPSS. Both leaders spend considerable time engaging with stakeholders about the conceptual frameworks of academic excellence and student experience that anchor the new strategic plan, and how to render them operable. By engaging others in creating a picture for the future, the conceptual frameworks are gaining relevance and momentum for change, such that other leaders have begun to express shared accountability for their successful integration. While there is a small number of senior leaders that are likely to be apathetic to the approach, past behaviour demonstrates that they will cooperate in the interest of not agitating the organization.

Credible Leadership and Change Champions

With the restructuring of the college's executive team, leaders across the organization whose reputations did not engender the college's "collaborative and innovative mindset" (Metro College, 2019b, p. 20) have since left the organization. This created space for new and existing leaders to rehabilitate previously fractured relationships and to identify new common ground for the future. The college has attracted top talent to its leadership ranks, including not only the leading coalition of four vice-presidents, but a new Chief Information Officer (CIO), a new Chief Financial Officer (CFO), and three new academic deans — all in the past five years. Senior team leaders are widely accessible to students and employees across the organization and model an openness and approachability that engenders credibility and honesty. Planning at the organizational level has now been centralized and has greater

transparency, insofar as the annual plans for divisions and departments are openly available to any manager within the college. Further, senior leaders are growing more fluent in one another's functional languages, such that employees noted that the senior team is unified and speaking with one voice (Metro College, 2019d). This is evident in planning discussions where the need for the quality framework is gaining organizational traction as leaders recognize that lack of congruence, scalability, and measurement has been the downfall of past change initiatives.

Openness to Change

Under the leadership of the VPSI, Metro College established an Integrated College Planning (ICP) team that maps and monitors the implementation of the college's strategic plan. The team includes leaders from strategy, institutional research, the office of the registrar, student success, communications, finance, and academic divisions. This team's role also includes responsibility for ensuring that leaders have the necessary tools to monitor, plan, and evaluate various initiatives that are linked to the organization's overall strategy. For example, the team is currently developing a college-wide approach to collecting student demographic data and personalized analytics that can be mapped against other institutional data, such as enrollment and demographic analytics, as predictors of student success. Additionally, they are developing a student-ready scorecard — a self-assessment tool to be used by departments and divisions that examines the degree to which they have the capacity and capability to cultivate the six dimensions of the student experience, and to subsequently use that assessment tool for continuous improvement and planning.

The ICP team reports regularly to the senior leadership team to ensure strategic alignment, and to ensure that the iterative nature of college planning is responsive to the ongoing internal and external changes and variables — the organizational resilience for which the senior leadership team is responsible. While some areas of the organization still maintain a degree of territorialism, particularly when examining problems or strategic risks, the innovative and collaborative mindset that is modeled

throughout the organization has helped to mitigate these issues and productively solve problems. The culture is highly innovative — so much so that the innovation often needs to be focused and appropriately shared so that it can serve to benefit the whole of the organization. The importance of a quality framework, as anchored in the principles of academic excellence and the dimensions of the student experience, continues to emerge as a conceptual and practical tool with which innovation can be appropriately qualified and organizationally sustained. The college has also engaged external consultant teams, where appropriate, to ensure that change can be appropriately managed, and to provide a path forward for prioritization and sequencing of emerging initiatives.

Rewards for Change

The college's total-rewards system provides opportunity to reward leaders for innovation and collaboration towards change. The annual goal-setting for leaders across the organization is linked to strategic objectives and overall organizational goals, and individual performance is reviewed and measured against these goals. Managers and other leaders are appreciative of a shift in organizational cultures where mistakes are seen as opportunities for learning as opposed to grounds for punishment and have expressed increased confidence in taking risks and new approaches to their work (Metro College, 2019e).

Measures for Change and Accountability

Perhaps one of the greatest reasons for proposing a values-driven quality framework is that the organization has acknowledged a strong need to use data and evidence to measure performance for the benefit of organizational success (Metro College, 2019b). Leaders are invested in understanding the types of data that are needed to inform decisions and facilitate change, and how such data can be democratically governed to the benefit of the whole organization. While there is a public policy-driven predisposition towards measuring satisfaction at Metro College, there is a shared understanding that satisfaction may only be a baseline indicator of student success. In fact, the college's future success

hinges on its ability to share a common narrative of powerful and compelling evidence and outcomes that demonstrate its vision of turning learning into opportunity.

Change Readiness Score

Cawsey et al. (2020) associate points with 36 factors that span the six readiness dimensions to offer a cumulative readiness score of between -25 and +50, with higher scores indicating increased readiness. Table 1 frames Metro College's senior team's readiness across each of the aggregate dimensions, based on the change champion's subjective assessment and estimated scoring.

Table 1

Metro College's Organizational Readiness for Change

Readiness Dimension	Aggregate Score	Maximum Score
Previous change experiences	2	4
Executive support	6	7
Credible leadership & change champions	10	11
Openness to change	17	22
Rewards for change	1	2
Measures for change & accountability	2	4
Total Score	38	50

Metro College's aggregate total of 38 out of a possible 50 points indicates that the organization is sitting in a potentially strong position for change. The areas requiring more attention include: attending to negative perceptions and attitudes of the past; facilitating greater openness by addressing the territorialism of siloes and the conflict that can follow; ensuring reward and recognition systems are in place; and evidencing change through measurement and accountability. Increased capacity and

readiness for change can be cultivated through ongoing leadership change reflection and praxis — a change monitoring process that is key to its success. This will be described more fully in Chapter 3.

Conclusion

Within an evolving neoliberal policy context that may seem to be at odds with the social good of the community, Metro College has an opportunity to strategically reconsider how it advances post-secondary education quality, while focusing on its values of equity and student success. Having to respond to shifting economic, social, and political drivers clearly requires a degree of leadership nimbleness and organizational resilience that is will be critical to the college's capacity to balance its strategic priorities and the moving targets of government policy. With increased emphasis on access and equity, a new strategic plan, and evolving leadership relationships, Metro College is well-positioned to tackle its strategic aspirations provided that the organization holds true to its historical LEAD values, and collectively moves the college towards the vision of turning learning into opportunity. Subsequently, the question of how college leaders can develop and implement a measurable, values-driven quality framework to advance equity and promote student success poses a compelling opportunity to improve college-level outcomes.

With the leadership agency to lead this shift the VPSS' leadership approach and plan needs to be more fully considered. Chapter 2 will further detail a social-justice educational leadership approach (Rottman, 2007) to change that begins with discourse reconciliation as an entry point to reorienting change at Metro College. Using frame bending (Nadler & Tushman, 1989) and tempered radicalism (Meyerson, 2001) as approaches to lead the change process, the author will explore organizational gaps in change openness and values, to surface three possible solutions to the problem of practice. Chapter 2 will then propose an organizational approach to framing quality as a means to improve college-level outcomes, to advance equity, and to promote student success, such that Metro College can realize its ambitious aspirations for a transformed college in 2030.

Chapter 2: Change Planning and Development

Chapter 1 revealed tensions arising from intersecting discourses of quality, and drivers of organizational change at Metro College. To operationalize these intersections towards the goal of developing a values-driven, measurable, quality framework for Metro College, the interlocking leadership discourses will need to be explored. Sergiovanni (1984) offered the idea that “leadership theory and practice . . . [dwells] excessively on some aspects of leadership to the virtual exclusion of others” (p. 6). Further, Bush (2007) contends that leadership theories and models are “artificial distinctions, or ‘ideal types’ in that most successful leaders are likely to embody most or all of these approaches in their work” (p. 403). The POP is therefore nested within a model of social justice educational leadership (Rottman, 2007), and the OIP is articulated within a hybrid framework for change (Myerson, 2001; Nadler & Tushman, 1989) that aligns with the college’s values and the distal goal of improving college-level outcomes regarding equity and student success. These frameworks are portrayed dialectically, as any one theory or approach to the POP and the OIP feels singularly incomplete, given Metro College’s context, and the complex interplay of quality, equity, and student success. Given that change theories tend to tell us more about how our colleges and universities “ought to be led . . . rather than explaining how they work” (Bush, 2015, p. 36), this chapter’s focus on OIP planning and development offers multiple theories of leadership and approaches to change that set the foundation for action and implementation at Metro College.

Leadership Approach to Change

Ryan and Rottman (2007) argue that beyond specific critical traditions such as feminism, anti-racism, and decolonization, *social justice leadership* uses an “umbrella . . . [that] points to a wider scope of study” (p. 11). It helps leaders — particularly those with broad scope and influence as scholars, educators, and community members — to focus beyond “one axis of disadvantage . . . to create a rallying point . . . [around] waves of inequitable policies by providing a discourse that enables them to

collectively understand and contest wide-ranging oppressive practices associated with the current social context” (p. 11). The social justice approach to educational leadership is generalizable in that it allows for different critical and post-structural approaches to be applied across the multiple and intersecting social-identity groups that broadly seek greater access and equity in post-secondary education. The approach is not restricted to critical paradigms (e.g., anti-racist, feminist, queer, and Indigenous). Instead, the social justice leadership is post-structural in nature in that it seeks to address the common problem representations among ideas and ideologies, leadership, power, and freedom.

Reconciling Discourses of Leadership for Social Justice

Given the complexity of perspectives that may surface as Metro College works towards a shared quality framework to advance equity and student success outcomes, college leaders must navigate between discourses, power, and freedom, as they conceptualize the social justice approach to be undertaken through the OIP. Using a post-structural lens, these underlying ideas and problem representations will need to be reconciled, not only in mapping the power relations between discourses (Foucault, 1980), but also in understanding how each shapes leadership at the college. Further, critical theoretical approaches can be used to contemplate these discourses within the context of specific equity issues, and in so doing surface the experiences, identities and ideologies through which leadership is practiced among individual leadership actors across the college.

Discourse as Leadership

Rottman (2007) describes Foucault’s (1980) concept of *discourse* as “dominant, moving ideas that subtly influence meaning, depending on context . . . [through which] we legitimize certain understandings of the world by speaking them into existence” (p. 56). She similarly equates discourse to “pervasive policies . . . expressed through the domain of language, [which] infiltrate social spaces, and take shape when implemented by specific individuals in specific contexts” (p. 56). Arising from the connection between theory, discourse, and policy, Rottman proposes that discourses themselves enact

leadership in that they “influence the actions of organizations and individuals with which or with whom they relate [and] may themselves be conceptualized as leaders” (p. 57). Her idea of discourse as its own performance of leadership is critical to the POP in considering the power and influence of neoliberal policies and ideologies that have shaped the ways in which colleges conceptualize quality and success. Even though the work to advance quality and success is enacted by people as leaders and as influencers, the extent to which neoliberal and post-structural ideologies can be at odds with one another enacts a discourse that in and of itself exercises leadership. Rottman asserts that:

Leadership is understood as a relational form of influence, [so] it becomes possible to conceive of organizations and ideas as possessing leadership qualities . . . [leading] individuals and organizations in powerful ways that must be acknowledged in the field of educational administration if our theories of leadership and change are to move beyond their current individualistic and behaviouristic focus. (Rottman, 2007, p. 57)

Leadership and Power

In examining leadership pedagogy, Collinson and Tourish (2015) affirm a post-structural critique by calling upon leadership education “to improve students’ ability . . . to reflexively consider power’s potential for productive use” (p. 581). They argue that how we are taught about leadership and how we enact it is flawed by a “technocratic bias that divorces leadership from purpose and means from ends” (p. 581). Furthermore, they propose a critical leadership curriculum that “examines the situated power relations through which leadership discursive practices are socially constructed, frequently rationalized, sometimes resisted, and occasionally transformed” (p. 585). In this approach, problematizing power as authority and influence challenges traditional assumptions about how and by whom power is produced, possessed, and enacted, and what ideologies reproduce potentially oppressive representations of leadership. This is particularly important when contemplating how quality, equity, and success are defined. Is each construct’s definition and measurability established by Metro College? Or, are they

defined by students, industry, employers, the community, or other stakeholders who directly or indirectly benefit from the enhanced quality of post-secondary education? This forces the question of what are the ultimate end-states of quality, equity, and student success, and how does Metro College plan to get there?

Power and Freedom

Giroux (1999) argues that the power struggles within and surrounding higher education “must be seen as part of a broader battle over the defense of the public good, and . . . the need to challenge the ever-growing discourse and influence of corporate culture, power and politics” (p. 151). He further argues that education is a “moral and political practice” (p. 154), and that quality cannot be reduced to considerations of accountability or cost, but instead that quality ought to focus on values and politics, and the relationship between education and freedom. Not unlike Freirean critical pedagogy (Veugelers, 2017), Giroux conceptualizes education as an apparatus of liberation, such that it allows individuals to connect to a fully realizable possibility of substantive democracy and self-determination. As such, educational quality ought not be considered within the domain of corporatized, technical outcomes, but instead within the broadest scope of culture, citizenship, and emancipation. Considering the implications for leadership and the POP, such a critical approach offers Metro College the opportunity to continually confront systemic and organizational inequities, by seeing the everyday world as problematic (Smith, 1987). In surfacing the potential for quality, equity, and student success to be objects of individual and collective freedom, the critical theoretical perspective challenges the college to move beyond accountability and technical outcomes, towards its moral and ethical obligations to advance outcomes for the greater social good. This reinforces the social contract that higher education has with its communities, that necessitates an orientation towards the public good, in addition to the economy — a process through which the question for colleges and universities becomes “how do we move from too much wrong, to less wrong, to justice” (Simpson, 2018, p.44)?

Social Justice Leadership in Education

Rottman (2007) reinforces three levels of analysis in framing a typology of social justice leadership in education: “leadership as a property of individuals, leadership as a property of organized groups, and leadership as a property of individual discourses” (p. 53). In so doing, she challenges educational leaders to consider leadership as “a relational form of influence that may exist at the individual, organizational, or discursive level” (p. 53), such that it is possible for leadership to manifest beyond the actions and characteristics of an individual. Groups, organizations, systems, and ideas interplay with one another in complex dynamics, and in many ways, influence one another and the person or problem they endeavour to lead (Rottman, 2007). This interplay illuminates the power relations among individuals, groups, and discourses in education, and creates space for social justice to be considered and advanced.

Similarly, Ryan and Rottman (2007) signal that the scholarship of leadership and diversity is neither neutral nor fully objective because social justice scholars who may otherwise identify as theoretically critical, feminist, queer, or post-structuralist, “care deeply about what is happening to already-marginalized groups in schools and are determined to do something about it” (p. 11). Arguably, social justice leadership is deeply connected to the evolving humanity of both the leader as scholar-practitioner, and the equity-deserving groups with whom the leader seeks justice. As such, the need to examine values, beliefs and morals that emerge from leadership action and reflection at the individual, organizational and discursive levels of the college is an important component in the social justice change process.

Leadership for Change at Metro College

Without a critical examination of power relations across levels of organizational leadership, Metro College will continue to reproduce structural inequities in the educational system that “corporate or individualistic [conceptions] of leadership . . . do little to address” (Rottman, 2007, p. 80). Given that

Metro College endeavours to develop a quality and success framework to improve organizational outcomes, the approach should consider the interplay across three levels of leadership property: senior leaders as individual leadership actors, the leadership enacted by the college's strategic vision and plan, and the leadership role of the college within its sector and in the social good of its community.

Three internal change drivers underpin the POP: advancing access and equity; the new strategic plan; and evolving leadership relationships. The proposed social justice leadership framework emphasizes the relationship between tempered radicalism at the individual level, moral leadership at the strategic organizational level, and transformative leadership at the discursive level of the social context in which the college exists. With this approach, each of the three leadership approaches inform one another and may in fact be enacted across each level. Given that leadership is a relational practice, the approaches undertaken to improve college-level quality outcomes to advance equity and success must also be similarly connected and fluid. This is particularly important when approaching change from the standpoint of social justice, as colleges are socially-constructed organizations, for the purpose of knowledge-generation and dissemination, to benefit the greater social good of the community (Dewey, 1961; Simpson, 2018).

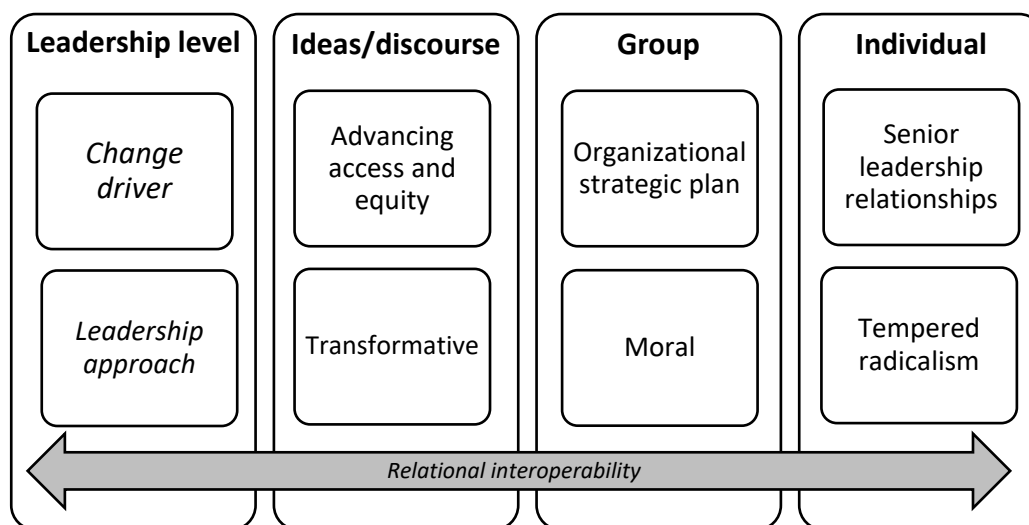
An Interoperable Leadership Approach

In order to advance the goal of improving college-level outcomes, which are fundamentally grounded in quality, equity, success, and access, the various leadership approaches undertaken will be enhanced by being similarly grounded. Interoperability among each leadership level and approach will afford greater flexibility and responsiveness to work with the dynamics of power and influence as exercised by individuals, groups and discourses that enact leadership within the college setting. To improve the college-level outcomes of quality, equity, and success, it is important to explore leadership approaches at each level, and how their relative interoperability can help to propel change forward

through the OIP. The relationships between the leadership level, the change drivers underpinning the POP, and the leadership approaches to be undertaken at Metro College are illustrated in Figure 3.

Figure 3

Hybrid of Leadership for Quality, Equity and Success at Metro College



Transformative educational leadership. Shields (2010) proposes a post-structural approach to transformational leadership that expands beyond what Burns (2010) identified as the need to transform the “attitudes, norms, institutions, and behaviours that structure our daily lives (2010, p. 414). Shields maintains that Burns’ idea of transformational leadership and transformative leadership are conflated, and frames a differential theory for transformative educational leadership, which emphasizes Freire’s (1998a) assertion that while education is not the ultimate tool for social change, transformation cannot occur without it. For Shields, Burns’ transformational leadership represents a reciprocity of transactions that lead to the transformation of organizational qualities and effectiveness. Rather, transformative educational leadership “begins by challenging inappropriate uses of power and privilege . . . that create or perpetuate inequity and injustice” (Shields, 2010, p. 564), and consequently transforms both the

organization and greater social good it serves. Her assertion that “transformative leadership inextricably links education and educational leadership with the wider social context in which it is embedded” (Shields, 2010, p. 559) makes transformative leadership and social justice inseparable.

Transformative educational leadership reifies what Weiner (2003) described as “a dialectic between individual accountability and social responsibility” (p. 89), such that leaders are called to “instigate structural transformations, to reorganize the political space, and to understand the relationship between the leaders and the led dialectically” (Shields, 2010, p. 570). In doing so leaders tend to act within an articulated form of social justice activism that begins with praxis — critical and continuous reflection and action that continually informs the iterative and dialectical relationship between the leader and the led, and by consequence, renders real the underlying interlocking power relations among them (Freire, 1970). Further, within the complexity of organizational systems like education, realizing the distal outcomes of education is more likely when the learning environment is inclusive, respectful, and equitable (Capper & Young, 2014). Transformative educational leadership requires that institutions and leaders address issues and inequities in the public good, including democracy, civic life, and citizenship, such that society is “strengthened [by] participation of knowledgeable and caring citizens” (Shields & Hesbol, 2019, p. 5).

Moral leadership. The literature signals that moral and ethical discourses and behaviours are intrinsic in transformational and transformative leadership (Burns, 2010; Giroux & McLaren, 1986; Shields, 2010). Sergiovanni (2007) emphasizes the centrality of morality to leadership by declaring “leadership as a moral craft” (p. 1), through which connections and coalitions are built to enact the community covenant engendered in schooling. Further, Foucault (1986) describes morality as a set of values and rules that constitute an actionable “prescriptive ensemble” (p. 25) that is transmitted, realized, and reproduced such that it is institutionalized in the “moral code” (p. 25) of a prescriptive agency. Within organizations, like schools and colleges, this moral code “conditions and frames who we

are, what we can be, what we ought to be, and how we should conduct our relations to ourselves and others” (Weiskopf & Willmott, 2013, p. 472). Following this, within an organization like Metro College being part of the college sector in a provincial post-secondary system or its collective representation, this moral code can reveal an *organizational morality* as an implicit ethos that anchors and shapes how groups and stakeholders lead within their individual and interrelated contexts.

Burns’ (2010) work on transformational leadership emphasizes the conversion of transformational leaders into moral agents — a change through which the leader privileges the “fundamental wants, needs, aspirations, and values of the followers” (Krishnan, 2003, p. 346), such that aligning with and meeting these needs becomes the primary focus of moral leadership. Bass (1985) critiqued Burns’ moral imperative of leadership in arguing that leadership’s focus was what followers *could do*, rather than what they *could become*. However, Burns emphasized that moral leadership is inherently foundational to transformational leadership insofar as it “raises the level of human conduct and ethical aspiration of both leaders and led [and has] a transforming effect on both” (2010, p. 20).

Within a marketized context such as that facing Ontario’s publicly-assisted colleges, Kelly (2004) proposes that society’s public and private institutions need to organize around principles of solidarity and subsidiarity in providing moral leadership to address inequities, such that “all persons are placed in positions whereby they are able to share in the benefits of the newly-formed global economy” (p. 283). He argues that this is particularly important at a time when organizations, corporations, and governments are called upon to collaborate to address problems of common societal concern, and when “we have yet to resolve the question of who we are and what constitutes our ultimate, common good, the good we all must share in common as equal partners in a world-wide community” (Kelly, 2004, p. 283). Simpson (2018) asserts that since individuals and institutions in Canada “profess an allegiance to democratic modes of living” (p. 120), colleges and universities must develop and enact a “language and imagination for democratic practices, the public good, and justice” (p. 120). Further, organizations that

share responsibility for the public good, especially those that seek to address interlocking systems and structures of power, must lead from a highly-developed sense of moral self-concept, so that they engender trust in their leadership authenticity that influences positive outcomes on followers. (Hannah et al., 2005).

Tempered radicalism. Shields (2010) characterizes the transformative leader as one who “lives with tension and challenge” (p. 563) and who possesses “moral courage” (p. 579) that is often enacted through navigable activism in and through existing organizational structures and processes. Jackall (1988) refers to the interplay of these structures and processes as moral mazes, which can be internally navigated using tempered radicalism as a compelling form of leadership for organizational insiders (Meyerson & Scully, 1995). Tempered radicals are characterized as “individuals who identify with and are committed to their organizations, and are also committed to a cause, community, or ideology that [could be] fundamentally different from, and possibly at odds with the dominant culture of their organization (Meyerson & Scully, 1995, p. 586).

This approach is a significant departure from most constructs of organizational leadership, particularly those in the senior ranks of post-secondary education, that centre individuals as leaders relative to their hierarchical positions of power and influence within colleges as corporatized institutions. Instead, Meyerson and Scully offer an approach that centres the power and influence of marginalized and othered people as a leadership discourse unto itself (Rottman, 2007), which by consequence affords the individual leader a degree of social identity capital within the organization. The organizational leadership capital garnered by having an othered social identity presents a compelling catalyst for social justice change.

Bringing together aspects of moral and transformative leadership, tempered radicalism reaffirms the capacity for change by leadership actors who are socially and structurally located outside the margins of formal or informal organizational structures. having positional authority however, does

not preclude an individual from being a tempered radical. Instead, it can be the leader's lived experience of being marginalized or othered — socially, structurally, or systematically — that induces empathy as a point of action for change leadership and transformation of the status quo. For example, tempered radicals can be women, Black people, Indigenous people, neuro-diverse people, non-binary people, queer people, people who face disability-related barriers, and others whose social identity experience conflicts with the dominant hegemonic culture of an organization or group. Moreover, lived experience often resides among multiple social identities, creating an identity *intersectionality* (Crenshaw, 2017) that surfaces alternate and amplified modes of discrimination and exclusion. This intersectionality contends with particular types of discrimination and barriers in the higher education context that tempered radicals are often well-positioned to lead towards resolution (Mitchell et al, 2014). Meyerson and Scully suggest that this intersectionality further amplifies the social capital of the tempered radical, rendering another lens through which they can examine and act upon interlocking organizational social problems. Tempered radicals typically lead a double organizational life — one that is performative to align with and pass within the dominant culture, and another that is a more authentic expression of the leader's fullest self. As a result, the tempered radical leads in a “tenuous balance between two cultural worlds” (Meyerson & Scully, 1995, p. 589).

Broadly characterized, tempered radicalism “tends to be less visible, less coordinated, and less vested with formal authority; it is also more local, more diffuse, more opportunistic, and more humble than the activity attributed to the modern-day hero” (Meyerson, 2001, p. 171). As a leadership typology, then, tempered radicalism offers an approach to enliven broad discourses and behaviours emanating from moral and transformative leadership, so that they become sites for tempered social change within organizations.

Propelling Change Across Leadership Levels

The social justice leadership model suggests that leadership in all three forms (moral, transformative, and tempered radicalism) can be engaged at the three sites for change within the scope of the POP. The drive for Metro College to improve college-level quality outcomes by developing a values-based framework to advance equity and promote success traverses Rottman's (2007) three leadership levels: the college as a representation of educational ideology of access and equity (discourse/idea); the leadership emanating from the college's strategic plan (group); and the individuals who comprise the college's leadership team (individual). Addressing the POP within one of these levels alone would ignore the ways that quality, equity, and success are constructed within the other two, as they inherently exert leadership onto one another.

Further, equity, quality and success are rendered technical as a series of relatable and definable objects, including KPIs, mandate agreements, and annual reports, to the extent that the objects impose limits and characteristics that complicate the underlying discourses that connect equity, quality, and success (Li, 2011). These objects and their summative representations can arguably compose a widely understood and operable set of outcomes for Metro College — both as an institution alone and as part of the social infrastructure through which various organizations and agencies carry out mandates of access, education, and employment. Therefore, to propel change within the OIP, the change champion and leaders need to consider how to dialectically bring objects of equity, quality, and success into effect across the three leadership levels.

Table 2 illustrates examples of how leadership can be enacted dialectically within the context of the POP. In reviewing the table, one can read horizontally across leadership levels and observe examples of how the three leadership approaches can ultimately improve college level outcomes, within the context of advancing access, the new strategic plan, and evolving leadership relationships. Similarly, in reading vertically through leadership approaches, their leadership interoperability relative to the

leadership levels of ideas, groups, and individuals is also portrayed. Various leadership actors within the organization can use different leadership approaches within related levels to prompt change. For example, at the ideas/discourse level, Metro College may leverage tempered radicalism insofar as the organization may be more allied with equity-deserving groups than other colleges. As the insider-outsider within the sector, the college can use a tempered radical standpoint to call other organizations and their leaders to action through an appeal to the moral imperative of education for the public good. At the point where there is a moral leadership groundswell among the 24 colleges to move towards a more equity-promoting accountability and funding framework in the province, the sector can act as a collective of moral agents to exert transformative leadership at the provincial policy and public discourse levels. All three leadership approaches are interrelated, and when enacted in relation to one another, they can propel change at different degrees and scales.

The focus of OIP planning and implementation, specifically to develop and implement a quality framework to advance college-level outcomes, is likely going to emerge through moral leadership and tempered radicalism at the group and individual levels. This illustrates the starting point for how grassroots, tempered radical leadership on the part of individual leaders, and the college itself, can not only transform the college through organizational outcomes, but also influence organizational, college-sector and social discourses through leadership objects, such as policy, KPIs, partnerships, committees, and outcomes measurement.

Table 2*Propelling Social Justice Leadership at Metro College*

Leadership Level		Leadership Approaches		
		<i>Transformative educational leadership</i>	<i>Moral leadership</i>	<i>Tempered Radicalism</i>
<i>Ideas/discourse</i>	Advancing access & equity as part of the college sector	Exert college collective agency through advocacy and lobbying to transform government policy such that it foregrounds access to post-secondary education for equity-deserving groups as a means to advance inherent economic and social interests.	Articulate and emphasize equity-focused KPIs as part of self-determined college level outcomes as part of Strategic Mandate Agreement (SMA).	Align with other equity-seeking colleges and external stakeholder groups, including industry and funders, to create new partnerships and drive a new social discourse that advances the common good.
<i>Group</i>	College strategic plan	Establish and embed organizational outcomes emanating from the strategic plan in internal accountability metrics for college Board of Governors.	Enliven strategic commitments to inclusion, with increased access to learning and success as grounded in the college's LEAD values.	Implement and measure activities relating to quality and success within strategic commitments and an equity-driven outcomes framework.
<i>Individual</i>	Senior leadership relationships	Organize senior leaders to enact social justice leadership in sector networks and inter-college committees that provide feedback to and influence sector advocacy positions and government policy.	Collaborate to explicate an organizational moral code that internally governs organizational planning and policy.	Leverage diversity of social identity and lived experience of the change leader and among college leaders to create space for alignment and reconciliation of personal values and morals relative to planning, policies, programs, and practices at the sub-group (divisional) level in the organization.

Framework for Leading the Change Process

Cawsey et al. (2016) suggest that understanding the type of organizational change to be undertaken will reveal the types of leadership actions needed to realize success. They note that even though change is critical to organizational resilience and survival, it is still extremely challenging to implement successfully. Change can incite fear, uncertainty, and a range of other responses within individuals, groups, and stakeholders that either undermine or advance the change initiative. As such, successful change leaders play multiple roles amid “paradoxes of change” (Cawsey et al., 2016, p. 30) that require a thorough understanding of not only the organization itself, but also the nature of the change — as it is envisioned, perceived, and experienced.

Type of Change

In an effort to improve college-level outcomes through a values-based quality framework, Metro College is positioned to undertake radical change (Cawsey et al., 2016). This type of change is strategically proactive, in that it repositions the whole organization, focusing on organization-wide components and groups to disrupt the organizational status quo. The historical change reluctance at Metro College, specifically relating to its efforts to improve student retention and persistence rates, has created a need to reengineer related policies, programs, and practices, as student enrollment is the lifeblood of the organization’s resource base. This is the specific leadership call to action for the change champion within the context of the OIP. Recognizing the shifting policy and social landscape within the provincial sector and the focus on college-level outcomes, Metro College underpinned its strategic plan with principles academic excellence and optimal student experience (see Figure 1). This conceptual framework for organizational change heralds the college’s future, orienting its work relating to quality, equity, and success.

Reorienting Change

The change at Metro College to better coordinate a quality framework towards improved college-level outcomes is reorienting (Nadler & Tushman, 1989) insofar as it anticipates external events but emphasizes and honours continuity with the college's LEAD values and its past. The change can be described as *frame-bending* because it represents "a major change without a sharp break within the organizational frame" (Nadler & Tushman, 1989, p. 196). The perceived intensity of the change could be significant, given the ways that work relating to quality, equity and student success have been historical decentralized across the college's academic and administrative units, and its campuses. This is further compounded by the college's entanglements with the power and priorities of interdependent stakeholders including the provincial government, broad industries, employers, equity-deserving communities and groups, and student and employee unions. Nadler and Tushman assert that organizations are "political systems, and changes occur within the context of both individual and group aspirations" (1989, p. 202). As such, this gives rise to an interplay between "power politics and pathology . . . [that are] a normal part of organizational life" (1989, p. 202) anticipated to surface and unfold given the relational nature of the leadership levels and approaches framing the POP.

Approach to Change

The framing of the change across three leadership levels and approaches illustrated in Table 2 anchors the overall change project in its endeavour to develop and implement a values-based, measurable quality framework to improve equity and student success. Opportunities for change at Metro College exist among the discursive, organizational, and individual leadership levels, at each of which action can be considered through lenses of tempered radicalism, moral leadership, and transformative educational leadership. However, the proposed OIP situates potential solutions at the intersection of leadership from Metro College's strategic plan and that of college leaders as individual

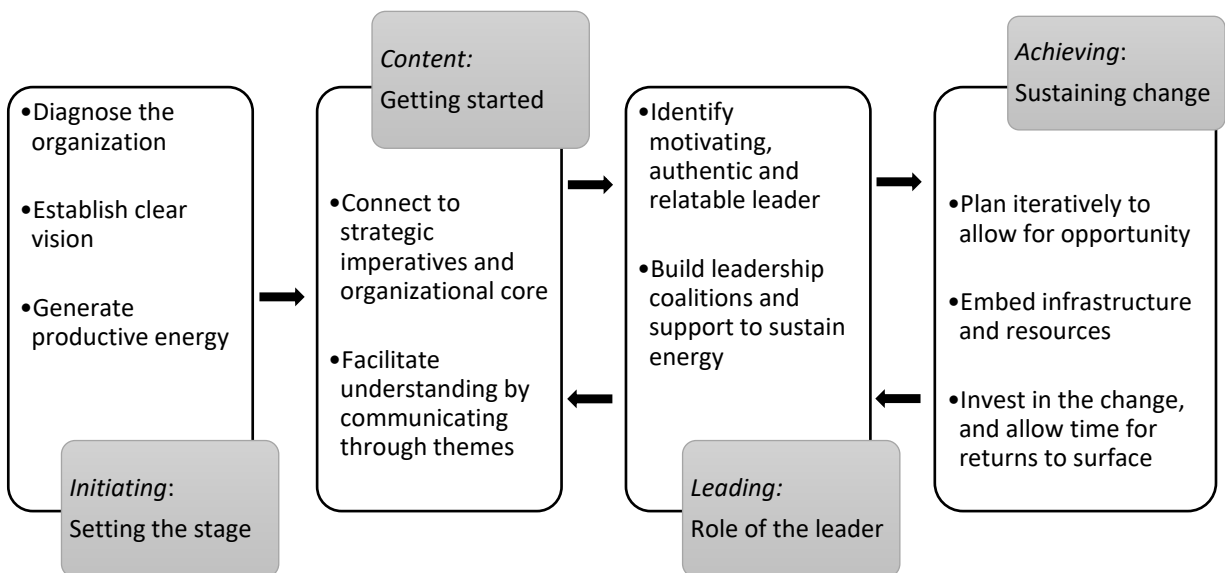
actors. Thus, the approach to change employs two models that complement the relational nature of this leadership space: frame-bending and tempered radicalism.

Reorienting Towards Quality by Organizational Frame Bending

Nadler and Tushman (1989) elaborate their analysis of reorienting change by offering a model of organizational frame-bending that will reposition Metro College's strategic approach to quality. The model emphasizes the need to structure the change across four phases as shown in Figure 4: initiating the change, content of change, leading change, and achieving change.

Figure 4

Principles of Effective Frame Bending



Note: Adapted from Nadler & Tushman, 1989, p. 197

Arguably, the OIP and the proposed change solution underpin the first stage of the change model: *initiating change*. In this particular space, a diagnosis of the case for change is undertaken, and a vision for an altered end state is described. The energy needed to advance the proposed solution will be relative to the extent to which the OIP is understood, embraced, and positioned as a strategic priority for Metro College. Given the leadership agency of the VPSS as the change leader, and the role of the leading coalition of vice-presidents, this energy and drive is achievable.

In the *content* stage of frame bending, the OIP will also serve Metro College well insofar as the analysis of the POP anchors the need to change within the organization's strategic plan as a key change driver. Nadler and Tushman (1989) suggest that if leaders in the organization perceive that past efforts to change have not been successful, particularly towards quality, the wholesale change may in fact be resisted. Overcoming that resistance is possible then, by positioning the change solution in a manner that has "organizational resonance . . . related and consistent with some of the [organization's] historical core values" (Nadler & Tushman, 1989, p. 199). Of equal importance is the need to facilitate understanding through three key themes. By connecting the proposed change to the college's commitment to quality, equity, and student success, and anchoring those three themes in historical organizational values, the proposed solution is positioned to generate momentum towards change.

In the *leading change* stage of frame bending, Nadler and Tushman suggest that the "magic leader" (1989, p. 200) has an important role in: creating a sense of urgency; being a champion of key themes; using a mix of leadership styles to engage stakeholders; and engaging in behaviours that envision, energize, and enable community members to adopt the proposed change. The VPSS, given his role and social capital in the organization, is strongly positioned to lead the change in this regard. At the same time, he must establish coalitions — with the other vice-presidents and senior leaders — who endorse the vision and are willing to speak in favour of, and resource, the change initiative.

The change implementation plan described in Chapter 3 will attend to the fourth stage of the model, *achieving*. Again, the stages are iterative, particularly the leading and achieving stages, and will depend upon fluid participation from multiple stakeholders to move the solution forward. This iterative and dynamic mindset is necessary, as each level of the organization “has to go through its own process of comprehending the change and coming to terms with it” (Nadler & Tushman, 1989, p. 202).

Reorienting Leaders through Tempered Radicalism

Meyerson and Scully (1995) contend that the tempered radical tends to live in a state of “enduring ambivalence” (p. 588) that arises out of their dual organizational identity. This ambivalence manifests in three relational domains. First, as “outsiders within” (p. 589), tempered radical leaders can access the tools, resources, and discourses of change, while also being able to detach from the dominant system, seeing a problem or site of change in both objective and subjective ways. Second, as “critics of status quo and of untampered radical change” (p. 589), the leaders’ marginality, across one or more intersecting social identities, allows them to critique the present state, while also critiquing more radical and disruptive approaches. In this regard, the ability to be independent is important. Thirdly, as advocates for the status quo and for radical change, the leaders can “earn rewards and resources that come with commitment and (tempered) complicity, and these become their tools for change” (p. 589).

At the same time, this ambivalence can challenge and criticize the tempered radical as a leader such that: they are perceived as being hypocritical; they can be easily isolated within the organization or group; they encounter pressure to co-opt their identity to align with the dominant insider perspective; and they can carry an immense emotional burden of the labour of social change that relates to the centrality of their personal identity. To mitigate these challenges, the tempered radical employs a four-pronged strategy of optimizing small wins, of leveraging local and spontaneous action that is authentically aligned with the change initiative, of exercising language fluency and discourse literacy

that allows them to navigate organizational moral mazes, and of establishing affiliations and allegiances with organizational actors who represent both sides of their identity (Meyerson, 2001).

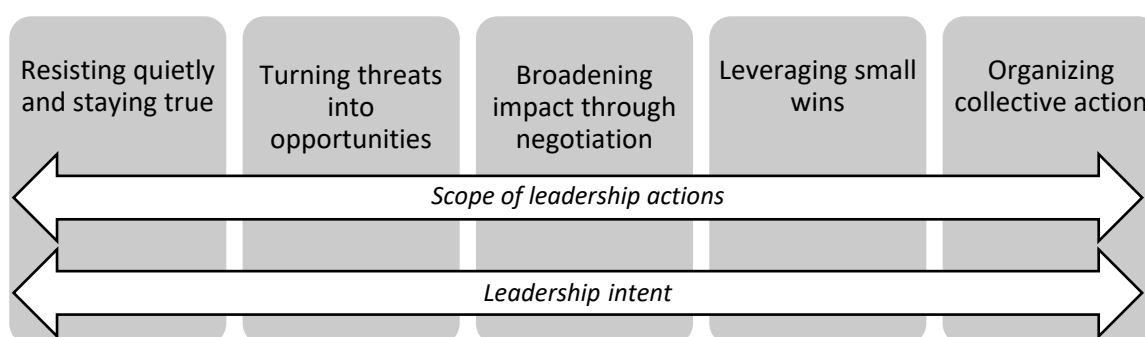
With that balance in mind, the tempered radical uses a spectrum of strategies (Meyerson, 2001) that frame the ways through which change in the OIP may be undertaken. These strategies vary according to the scope of the leader's actions, and the intent underlying the leader's actions — both of which aggregate to varying possible outcomes in the change initiative. Within the context of the OIP, the scope and intent are defined by the VPSS as a change champion, engaging the team of senior leaders who broadly represent the prevailing hegemony in educational leadership, which is arguably white and masculine performing. For moral leadership to be effective, however, leaders require a self-critical attitude (Krishnan, 2003) that is grounded in an “understanding of the real needs of others, the extent to which [the] leader's [self-] perception and other's perceptions match” (p. 345). And that critical self-concept is not isolated to the change champion alone. It is embedded in a critical consciousness of the self (Freire, 1970), which is comprised of critical reflection, motivation, and action within the experience of equity-deserving people (Diemer et al., 2016). This examination of self within the experience of the other serves as a powerful catalyst for equity-promoting leaders to cultivate a sense of self-other (Krishnan, 2003) and enact various objects of power and authority at their disposal to work with marginalized communities towards liberation. The development of a critical self-concept among leaders at Metro College will help them to relate to the experiences of equity-deserving communities, either through their own diverse social identities or through social justice allyship. This self-concept, as a critical component of humanitization, emerges as a significant entry point for leaders to enact tempered radicalism for social change along a continuum of leadership action and intent.

Meyerson argues that contrary to the archetype of the leader as a hero, tempered radical leadership “will undoubtedly appear insignificant” (2001, p. 175). This work takes time, and it matters to leaders as individuals, the people with whom they lead, and the communities in which they lead

towards social change. And they do so by “telling the truth even when it’s difficult to do so, and by having the conviction to say engaged in tough conversations” (Meyerson, 2001, p. 176), because leadership for the tempered radical is not about themselves as a leader, but about their capacity to lead. Figure 5 illustrates the framework for leading the change process from a tempered radical position.

Figure 5

Tempered Radical Leadership Framework



Note: Adapted from Meyerson, 2001, p. 8.

Critical Organizational Analysis

The change-readiness assessment in Chapter 1 predicted areas within Metro College’s organizational culture that could strengthen through the change implementation plan. The following organizational gap analysis will help to provide a preliminary diagnosis of the individual standpoints of senior leaders, relative to the proposed change of implementing a values-based, measurable quality framework to improve college-level outcomes.

Change Readiness Gap Analysis

Based on the change readiness assessment undertaken in Chapter 1 (see Table 1), there are four key areas that will need to be addressed to increase Metro College’s capacity and readiness to undergo the reorienting change proposed in the OIP. These include attending to negative perceptions and

attitudes from past change experiences; facilitating openness to change by addressing historical siloes and leadership agency; reconsidering rewards and recognition; and implementing accountability and measurement. For this gap analysis, the last two dimensions will be considered together as recognition at Metro College, specifically relative to leader compensation, is dependent on measurement and accountability.

Previous Change Experiences

Chapter 1 illustrated that the goals and aspirations of Metro College's previous strategic plan were not fully realized. It was an ambitious 10-year plan that was not able to withstand significant changes in government accountability and funding policy, and changes in organizational leadership capacity to execute the strategy during the last two to three years of its lifespan. Previous funding models and government policy motivated an entrepreneurial culture within the organization which, while garnering increased revenues through enrollment expansion, entrenched a culture of siloed competition that pinned groups and leaders against one another to obtain resources.

Further, in evaluating the need for organizational change and motivating attempts to do so, the college historically privileged expertise from external corporate consultants over that of the organization's internal academic and administrative units. These external consultant reports were not often actioned on an organizational scale, as they did not reflect the complex interdependencies among the college's culture, sub-cultures, and stakeholders. They have been viewed as a drain on resources that might otherwise be utilized to support key priorities, including advancing equity and student success. This change inertia resulted in decreased trust in change initiatives among leaders and altered many of the social relations upon which leadership collaboration is built (Sorensen & Hasle, 2009). The devaluing of internal knowledge and expertise left leaders to exercise influence in the specific organizational sub-groups over which they held sway, and in which they had trust — producing a

generalized malaise towards college-wide change initiatives that were intended to advance the good of the whole organization.

To repair this collective trust, the development and implementation of a college-wide quality framework that will advance shared priorities of equity and student success could facilitate new collaboration and advance the leadership interdependencies among the senior team members, which in turn will strengthen momentum for change through all levels of the organization. Given that trust is seen as “semi-stable and based on the processing of numerous specific experiences” (Lines et al., 2005, p. 225), and can significantly shape an individual’s response to leaders and change, it is an important relationship dimension that has the potential to be molded by an impactful and significant organizational change initiative (Lines et al., 2005), and the modelling of positive leadership behaviours by individuals therein.

Openness to Change

Arising from negative previous change experiences that eroded the social trust among leaders, change at Metro College is not always viewed as opportunity, but rather as a disruption to the comfortable ways of leading and operating. In reflecting on past attempts to change, senior leaders described initiatives wherein their representative stakeholder values and priorities were neither considered nor reflected, and in which the values of the change leader relied upon a narrow perspective of the object of the change. As a result, openness to change can increase only when leaders, and the values and priorities they represent, are understood to be active stakeholders within the greater context of any future college-wide change initiative.

To that end, Metro College ought to consider engaging a subset of the group of senior leaders as a steering committee to plan, monitor and facilitate the change within the OIP. Spearheaded by the leading coalition, the steering committee will model the collaborative and innovative mindset expected to advance the organization’s strategic plan (Metro College, 2019b) and incubate a new approach to

leadership learning within the senior team. Utilizing an iterative and consultative approach through which participating leaders can come together to shape the quality framework will entrench expectations to contemplate and consider a diversity of community values and perspectives that are vital to advancing equity, quality, and success across the college.

Recognition, Accountability and Measurement

The college's strategic plan signals the critical importance of using data to inform decisions and drive new initiatives. Further, the previously-described erosion of leadership trust was a byproduct of a lack of measurement and evidence for the need to change, the efficacy of change processes, and the scalability of change implementation to the collective benefit of the whole organization. In advancing the effort to develop and adopt a shared quality framework for the college, which represents a significant reorienting change, the evaluation and monitoring approaches will need to be developed collaboratively by the steering committee, with the full endorsement of the senior team. Evaluation questions will shape the direction of the process, and transparency of the monitoring criteria will ensure the continued development of leadership trust. To that end, the change plan will need to attend to both the expectant change outcomes and processes, as they relate to the organizational and social leadership relationships among the senior team.

Organizational Diagnosis

Manning (2018) proposes that in order "to understand college and university organizational cultures, one must learn to read and interpret the ways of operating, languages, and cultural elements within the setting" (p. 70). To that end, undertaking an organizational diagnosis will help in understanding the formal and informal interdependencies and relationships among the senior leadership team as the primary location for organizational change within the context of the OIP. The college's recent history of operating in organizational siloes produced a culture in which senior leaders and their scope of influence are informally designated as either being *academic* or *corporate*. This

language represents a significant cultural element at Metro College that highlights tensions among underlying discourses within organizational leadership. This casual language is pervasive across the organization and is often used throughout all employee groups. The extent to which it is embedded is an artifact of the long-standing historical tension that entrenched positions along two perspectives, and divided leaders into two vertical structures, especially when dealing with change.

This leadership binary emerged in the mid-2000s among individual senior leaders and the groups they led: one of academic deans with primary responsibility for academic program delivery and outcomes, and the other of senior executives and vice-presidents with college-wide administrative responsibility. Keeling et al. (2007) propose that organizational verticality is common in post-secondary institutions, due to lack of clarity of purpose, leader role confusion, and lack of strategic alignment. This vertical divide is particularly challenging for student affairs and services groups within colleges because their purpose of supporting student learning is inherently academic, but the technologies and processes through which this purpose is enacted are inherently managerial or corporate. At Metro College, this vertical divide is recognized across the organization as both a barrier to drive change and a rationale for preserving the historical way of leading and working, particularly in dealing with the broad areas of quality, equity, and student success. However, the senior leadership team has acknowledged that the divide needs to be addressed, and that a new leadership reciprocity needs to be established, especially since the leading coalition has been issued very specific college-wide mandates to coalesce these relationships to realize goals within the strategic plan. This will require trust and investment on the part of all leaders, on both sides of the academic-corporate divide.

Figure 2 detailed the senior leadership structure, and areas of responsibility relative to quality, equity, and student success. Within the academic-corporate binary, the President is viewed as being neutral, while the VPA, the associate vice-president, and the academic deans are on the academic side of the organization. The VPA navigates both sides of the binary, as they not only have responsibility for

academic matters, but also for those that relate to the other senior leadership portfolios. And while the VPSS, VPSI, the Senior Advisor, and the CIO all have responsibility for critical components of the college's academic mission, they and their teams are considered as corporate. The formal and informal manifestation of the academic-corporate binary can constrain the collaboration needed for Metro College to advance quality, equity, and success — particularly if the binary and its underlying discourses go unresolved. However, it is so pervasive in the organizational culture that it is a discursive leadership actor unto itself that could undermine progressive efforts to advance equity and promote student success. As such, it presents a significant risk in the OIP's change process, which endeavours to establish an approach to quality that spans the entirety of the organization, including the historically opposing leadership groups.

Following the organizational restructuring that was undertaken 2018, increasing trust and credibility has been a priority for the leading coalition. They have intentionally worked to model and engender a culture of organizational collaboration, which has begun to dismantle the informal yet powerful binary. However, in analyzing themes emerging from the change-readiness analysis, the historical binary and its residual negative outcomes constitute a powerful cultural undercurrent that requires attention throughout organizational change initiatives.

Possible Solutions to Address the Problem of Practice

Given the entrenched connection between government funding policy and college-level performance outcomes, possible solutions to address the POP need to be oriented with the distal goal of advancing those outcomes. The attribution of up to 60% of the Metro College's government funding based on these outcomes surfaces a tremendous degree of power and influence within the discourses surrounding them, and how they are rendered operable. Most significantly, outcomes are tied to a policy mandate that is described as *performance-based funding*, rendering performance as an object of a managerialist market state (Jarvis, 2014). This fundamentally skews the organizational perspectives

and operability of quality, equity, and success towards neoliberal and marketized discourses. The college's capacity to evidence the same, then, becomes inescapable in the overall funding and accountability landscape for the province.

Performance-based Outcomes

Metro College's Strategic Mandate Agreement (SMA3) for the period of 2020-2025 is an accountability mechanism through which the college demonstrates its intent to respond to "provincial government objectives and priority areas . . . supports transparency and accountability . . . [and] establishes allowable performance targets for 10 metrics upon which institutional performance will be assessed" (Government of Ontario, 2020a). Specifically, the agreement mandates outcomes that reinforce corporatized and neoliberal discourses of quality insofar as they operationalize a managerialist policy (Jarvis, 2014) that:

- ensures students and graduates are set up to succeed in rewarding careers;
 - encourages institutions to be more efficient, specialized and focused on what they do best;
 - [and] promotes greater accountability and transparency by ensuring that the funding postsecondary [sic] institutions receive results in positive economic outcomes
- (Government of Ontario, 2020a, "Changes to 2020-2025 Agreements" section).

In this policy directive, the government set out the 10 performance metrics and the phases through which they will be operationalized in order to meet the objective of attributing 60% of funding by 2025. For Metro College, this represents up to \$78-million in 2025 (Government of Ontario, 2020a). The metrics, as detailed in Appendix A, are aggregated into three groups that reflect key neoliberal policy priorities:

- *skills and job outcomes*: measured according to graduation rates, graduate employment rates, graduate earnings, participation in experiential learning, achievement on standardized skills tests, and enrollment in academic programs that serve labour market needs

- *economic and community impact*: measured according to research funding, apprenticeship capacity, revenue generated by student tuition as a share in the city population, and revenue generated by international student enrollment.
- *productivity, accountability, and transparency*: measured according to faculty workload and faculty compensation.

Reporting metrics relating to faculty compensation and faculty activity will not be tied to funding but are required due to government concern over faculty compensation. These comparative measures of managerial efficiency will inevitably challenge the tenets of faculty work — teaching, research, and service — and reinforce a dichotomous tension between managerialism and collegiality often experienced in post-secondary institutions (Tight, 2014). Framing all the performance metrics in this way renders them as economic instruments of human capital that the government justifies with the idea that individual economic gain cumulatively benefits the public good in a knowledge-based economy (Williams, 2008).

Exploring Solutions

With this performance funding model in place, and with very little agency at the college's organizational level to determine and calculate these metrics, Metro College must contend with deciding how to address the need to favourably influence college-level outcomes within the constraints of the accountability framework, with a view towards financial stability. The organization must do so specifically with the recognition that, despite other related government policy directives and social drivers, none of the 10 outcomes have specific accountabilities for broad representations of equity, quality, and success. The challenge ahead, then, is for Metro College to identify a solution to advance equity and student success, which are arguably conditions for college-level quality outcomes, within the existing accountability framework. In exploring options to address this challenge, Rottman's (2007) framework for social justice educational leadership (see Table 3) proposes three potential options to the

solution: actively maintain the organizational status quo, align the organization with current trends, or resist educational inequity.

Table 3

Social Justice Leadership for Organizational Change

Leadership Level	Proposed Change Solution and Leadership Action		
	<i>Actively maintain status quo</i>	<i>Follow current trends</i>	<i>Resist educational inequity</i>
Individual	Manage	Problem-solve	Advocate / resist
Organizational	Reaffirm existing hierarchical bureaucracy	Centralize authority with peripheral flexible networks	Form an activist collective
Discourse/Ideas	Rational technicism	Neo-liberalism	Critical theory

Note: Adapted from Rottman, 2007, p. 62.

Actively maintain the status quo

In addressing the POP, one option facing Metro College is to change nothing: to make no active effort to coordinate organizational leadership and resources to improve outcomes at the organizational level such that they advance equity and promote success. While the change in the government funding model has increased the financial stakes for the college, maintaining the status quo would do little to address potential outcomes emanating from change drivers in the organization, particularly those that punctuate the intersections of quality, equity, and student success. The decision to simply do nothing would be an effort of organizational blind faith that essentially ignores the dynamic context in which the college is operating and would pose several risks.

Maintaining the status quo would continue to position Metro College's quality outcomes towards the primacy of economic outputs such as skills and job placement. Reinforcing these outcomes as economic representations of quality would essentially ignore the calls from the community through the organization's strategic plan to advance equity and promote student success. In so doing, college leaders would continue to engage in practices that reinforce the existing siloed hierarchies within the organization, and in many ways, could amplify the intensity of power relations among the college's senior leadership. Rottman (2007) positions this approach within the ideology of rational technicism, which adopts a positivist ontology of reality as being objective to the observer, and an epistemology that favours logic and neutral analysis. By actively maintaining the status quo, the social intersections of quality, equity, and student success would be inadequately understood, as using technologies and methodologies grounded in the scientific method, mathematical logic, and predictability would be limiting (Rottman, 2007).

There are some possible advantages for the organization in terms of perceived efficiencies and savings. Actively maintaining the status quo would not incur costs associated with attributing additional resources to addressing the POP, such as the human resources needed to navigate organizational change, or the enhanced data and technology infrastructure necessary to do so. It would save college leaders from additional emotional and intellectual labour associated with engaging in the challenging and exposing work of evolving a diverse self-concept which can help build capacity and allyship with equity-deserving communities. Leaders would continue to manage in the most efficient way possible, and work towards minimum standards as opposed to optimal goals as expressed in the strategic plan. This approach would send a clear message to leaders across the organization, including individuals in labour unions and student government who seek to disrupt systemic power, that their grassroots efforts will likely not be welcomed. At the same time, taking such a neutralized management approach rather than a more humanized one could further agitate leaders within equity-seeking communities to increase

pressure for change from multiple organizational levels — including grassroots leaders, allied employees, tempered radicals, and members across the college community.

Despite potential advantages, the risks of maintaining the status quo are numerous. Prime among these risks is that this approach is reductionist in its considerations of the complex nature of quality, equity, and success, and seeks to generalize these critical dimensions of the college experience through managerial efficiency (Rottman, 2007). Actively deciding to not change, particularly in response to the POP, can be seen to favour stability and minimize leadership disruption in the organization. This would fail to address some of the planning and leadership tensions that have historically given rise to a decreased capacity to influence and scale improved college-level outcomes. Maintaining the status quo also assumes that Metro College can remain morally neutral to the complex issues and change drivers facing the organization, its students, and the community it serves. Such neutrality would further cement a market-driven approach to college education insofar as the outcomes that are deemed to matter — financially and in terms of public accountability — are those that are driven by educational outputs of graduates (as workers), employment, and salary.

Rottman (2007) asserts that a status quo approach is “a central barrier to socially just practice [because] . . . those in a position to define the problems to be solved will dominate” (p. 74). Essentially, by doing nothing to respond to the POP, Metro College would deny that there is a problem in the first place, because college leaders who retain organizational and structural power have the privilege to actively ignore the underlying social problems that hinder advancing quality, equity, and success for individuals other than themselves. This can be seen as blindness to the complexity of the social world and will do nothing to position Metro College to fulfill its mission and ambitious vision for the future. The bottom line is that the college cannot afford — financially, politically, and morally — to do nothing.

Follow current trends

Another option for the Metro College would be to leverage the current funding and accountability framework to internally coordinate work across the organization to realize more favourable accountability metrics and KPIs. Following current trends will focus the college on optimizing KPIs by aligning college processes and technologies, to the most efficient extent possible, to generate financially optimal outputs. This option would privilege internal alignment that has a likelihood of producing financially valued accountability metrics including graduate employment and salary, graduation rates and various internal utilization rates, particularly those relating to experiential learning, apprenticeship, and international student enrollment. Doing so would attempt to further the college's market position and maximize funding associated with the government determined KPIs. This option sees the POP as strictly one through which the Metro College needs to improve outcomes in an effort to navigate and succeed in the internally competitive marketplace. This approach would affirm that college leaders see increased financial pressure on outcomes as the prime representation of the problem and would orient the solution towards a problem to be solved by middle-managers within the organization.

Advantages of this approach include the possibility that some degree of organizational change is possible, albeit at the operational level. Internal coordination and alignment towards KPIs would increase the likelihood of realizing favourable outcomes and ensure maximum financial attribution of government funds. Doing so would require the internal coordination of processes and technologies for the purpose of optimizing organizational resources. Focusing this way could address what has been perceived to be as a lack of capacity among corporate departments to support the operational agency of academic divisions. For example, academic divisions have expressed concern in the past about the capacity for the college's career services department to provide operational support to division-level career events and activities. Increasing coordination between the academic divisions and the career centre (as a corporate service enabler) may in fact yield more favourable employment outcomes

through operational efficiencies. However, this opportunity is valued more so for its efficiency rather than for its potential to optimize career development and capability among students. An optimal move would afford peripheral flexibility in the organization, particularly among historically decentralized academic divisions, to continue engaging in practices that meet the perceived unique career needs of *their students, their industry, and their partners*.

This approach also assumes that decentralized evidence and data residing in the peripheral networks of academic divisions are both appropriate and reliable in addressing the challenge of improving graduate employment. As such, coordinating data would not significantly disrupt the authority and agency of existing ways of working, particularly as they relate to data governance and democracy. How the work associated with quality is organized would require the centralization of enabling infrastructure, in the form of technologies and processes, to facilitate the autonomy of seven academic centres — even where such autonomy diverges from the organization's strategy and mission. Despite being presented as an opportunity for managerial and resource efficiency through centralization, the prospect of having to provide infrastructure to meet the unique needs and priorities of all the academic areas seems to be an impossible task. The implementation and governance of the infrastructure would still be decentralized so as to not challenge existing ways of leading and working.

Rottman (2007) suggests that in following current trends to address the need to improve college-level outcomes, neoliberal ideologies would prevail in understanding and solving the problem-representation. The approach reinforces the existing discourse of educational marketization and competition, both internal to the college and the provincial sector, as doing so favours market equality, consumer freedom of choice, and service diversification as a pathway to organizational success (Busch, 2017; Rottman, 2007). The current public policy trend is driving competition in the sector, with colleges competing against their own metrics for increased percentages of declining funding, resulting in economic outputs as the prime expression of the public good of post-secondary education. Alignment

with this trend will allow Metro College to position itself in a way that has the potential to maximize financial gains from the performance-based funding model, and to garner reputational gains through a favourable profile in the eye of the public as consumers of education.

Within the existing financial model at Metro College, the budgets of academic divisions are based upon a contribution margin expressed as a percentage of revenue surplus that must be attributed to the college's non-academic budget to sustain organizational operations. With tuition and fees being more than 50% of annual revenues (Metro College, 2019c) this contribution model is necessary. However, within this model there is a degree of discretionary spending at the academic divisional level, that could otherwise be attributed to the college-wide budget so as to resource and sustain greater service coordination and enabling technologies that are needed to meet the organization's goals. Reallocating these discretionary resources would require an almost unanimous decision on the part of the academic deans to do so; lacking a common strategic framework for improving outcomes at the college level, such coordination would be nearly impossible to achieve.

The political will of senior leaders aside, an attempt to line up and coordinate processes at the operational level will necessarily draw upon the college's middle managers as problem-solvers, given their responsibility for the implementation of operating plans. The college has undertaken this approach before, and not realized favourable retention outcomes as a result of lacking a coordinated and strategically-aligned framework. (Metro College, 2018). Taking a similar approach will exacerbate change reluctance among middle managers with similar change experiences, and inevitably set them up to fail.

Further, simply aligning with the current trend does little to respond to the college's social contract for the public good. The approach does not question underlying power relations that may exist between public policy, colleges as organizations, individuals as leaders, and equity-deserving communities. Its neglect to do so reinforces the economic instrumentality of the accountability metrics

as a singular discourse of post-secondary quality and does not contend with the tension that surfaces for the college and its community in enacting its moral responsibility. As a result, grass roots activists, particularly those from equity-deserving communities within the college's stakeholder groups, will likely bear the burden of significant additional emotional labour in attempting to dismantle systemic barriers to equity and success.

Resist educational inequity

The third option to be considered through Rottman's (2007) social justice leadership model is to resist educational inequity. This approach would position Metro College to "work against the ideological grain of both the status quo and current trends [to] aim to disrupt rather than reinforce the current social order" (Rottman, 2007, p. 60). The idea of outright resisting the economic instrumentality of performance metrics and the inequities they reproduce seems impossible. Given the resource and leadership capital inequities represented in the totality of the province's education system — primary, secondary, and post-secondary — and lack of coordination in how the system is organized and governed, capacity to challenge current trends is likely to accumulate through everyday advocacy, activism, and resistance (Smith, 1987). By virtue of being a Crown corporation, Metro College is bound by provincial legislation and related policies that mandate the metrics. Quite simply, saying *no* is not an option. Doing so would pose a massive financial and reputational risk for the organization, its leaders, and the Board of Governors.

However, there are different ways that Metro College could resist educational inequities. Rottman states that leaders who enact advocacy, activism, and resistance to educational inequities largely recognize that "social inequity is reified by large-scale educational reform efforts, but they are able to find space within the existing organizational structure to challenge oppressive practices" (2007, p. 66). Access to internal space required to do so can be granted to those with leadership capital, through which educators can advance change relative to equity and success. However, doing so also

requires caution when naming and speaking truth to power and inequity, which can pose personal and political risk to leaders. This is more easily accomplished by leaders who resist from outside of educational organizations.

Metro College's president and four vice-presidents could use existing networks within the college sector, and their channels to provincial government, to advocate for and resist inequities that are represented in the performance metrics. This undertaking would require a greater degree of coordination and alignment of an activist collective within the sector of 24 publicly-assisted colleges, who prefer to advocate to government with a unified voice. Given the complex and unique organizational contexts, cultures, and communities of each of the 24 colleges, alignment in this regard would be extremely challenging and politically intense. Some colleges more readily align with economic instrumentality as a leading discourse for organizational outcomes and success. Others, like Metro College, negotiate multiple leading discourses given the drive to do so among its internal and external stakeholders, cultures, and contexts. This internal activism requires a mollified and tempered approach. Rottman calls out the prevailing "mismatch between educational rhetoric about supporting equity and diversity, and the actual inequities in the education system" (2007, p. 71) as an important opportunity for internal and external collective activism to be established to dismantle systemic barriers to quality, equity, and student success.

Similarly, in resisting educational inequity, Rottman calls upon leaders to engage critical theory as a tool to "acknowledge the socially constructed nature of dominant institutions that benefit the economic and cultural elite" (2007, p. 76). Critical theory allows the leader and their prevailing ideas to "demand vigilance [against] the slippery use of neo-liberal language" (Rottman, 2007, p. 76), and challenge the underlying discourses that create leadership momentum in organizations that reproduce systemic barriers to equity and success. This requires that leaders link their "leadership and change efforts to social equity, and [that they] take antioppression [sic] forms of feminism, antiracism [sic] and

neo-Marxism seriously” (Rottman, 2007, p. 77). Leadership of this nature, enacted by the college in its relationship to government and policy, is considerably risky. This is evidenced by the province’s premier, whose student ancillary fee policy (Government of Ontario, 2019b) attempted to de-fund college and university student unions by making fees supporting post-secondary student unions and their services optional to students (Canadian Federation of Students, 2019). This policy, which has since been overturned by the provincial court, was borne from the premier’s belief that “student unions [get] up to ‘crazy Marxist nonsense’” (Friesen, 2019). The government has hinted at its tolerance for action that pushes the boundaries of its neoliberal ideology, and as such, sector-wide resistance could be futile.

Proposed Solution for Equity and Student Success

Within the context of Rottman’s social justice leadership model, the proposed solution to the POP resides at the intersections of following current trends and resisting educational inequity. Both paradigms offer some viable aspects of leadership for change, particularly when balancing internal change drivers, and external context. Bridging these two paradigms requires leadership capacity to broker leadership in three domains:

- the domain of individual leaders to both problem-solve and resist;
- the domain of the college’s strategy and plans to motivate change through peripheral networks and through transformative leadership collectives;
- the domain of the college as community, and as a member of the college sector, to negotiate neoliberal and post-structural discourses of quality, equity, and student success.

Tempered radicalism as a leadership approach offers tremendous flexibility to negotiate these leadership domains, given the ability to navigate organizational change by manoeuvring through internal and external spaces. Within this proposed solution, the idea of tempered radicalism as being situated in the experience of leaders whose social identity conflicts with the dominant culture, extends to members

of the dominant culture who, through actionable social justice allyship, can navigate as outsider-insiders given their alignment with critical theory and post-structural ideology.

The proposed solution to the problem of improving college-level outcomes is for leaders to develop an integrated measurable quality framework that advances equity and promotes student success at Metro College. With performance-based outcomes connected to approximately \$78-million in annual funding, the college cannot afford to maintain the status quo in how it thinks about and operationalizes quality. Quality, and its relation to student success, cannot be ignored, because of the metrics:

1. Approximately \$25-million per year is linked to student success outcomes, such as skills acquisition, graduation, and employment.
2. Approximately \$43-million in annual funding is contingent on outcomes that relate to enrollment, including year-over-year student retention and persistence.
3. The remaining \$10-million in annual funding is related to outcomes that enable student engagement and success, such as experiential learning and engagement in research.

Largely, all the funding-contingent performance metrics can be enhanced to the betterment of college-level outcomes by dismantling systemic barriers that hinder access to and success through post-secondary education for students from equity-deserving communities. By developing a college-wide framework that seeks to internally transform economically instrumental performance outcomes through dimensions of equity and social diversity, and dimensions of the student experience, Metro College will be well-positioned to favourably shape college-level outcomes that more accurately reflect its LEAD values and its social contract for the public good of its students, employees, alumni, partners, and community.

This approach will require a considerable amount of internal research to regressively map and analyze the dependent variables of performance outcomes with the many independent variables that

predict favourable quality outcomes. This requires starting with the performance outcomes and working regressively through each outcome's dimensions of quality to identify measurable equity and student success variables. For example, three performance outcomes relate to graduation and employability — key drivers that underpin the historical mission of colleges and their founding legislation. So, Metro College would be well-served to improve these outcomes (graduation rates, employment rates in field of study, and starting salary) by working back to understand and measure the student success and equity variables that influence employability. As an illustration, considering employability as a micro-representation of quality, the college should consider questions such as:

1. How do students and graduates from equity-deserving populations experience barriers to graduation, both from college and in their specific programs of study?
2. How do students from equity-deserving communities access greater social capital, such as that attained by having family members in the chosen career or having an active professional mentor, that will facilitate a successful transition from college to career?
3. How do graduates from equity-deserving communities experience barriers to success in their careers within their given industries? What opportunities exist for the college to help students develop skills and capabilities to navigate those barriers and flourish?

Further, the college will need to determine how to measure these variables such that they can be used to evidence and tell the story of quality at Metro College, while also serving to support continuous quality improvement and planning throughout the organization. How long of a cycle of measurement would be required to cumulatively realize improved outcomes for the college? Is the life cycle of this process expected to be longer than that of the prevailing neoliberal government policy, which could loosen should there be a change in provincial leadership in the next election? This approach would completely transform the college's approach to and understanding of outcomes as being multifactor indicators of various representations of quality, rather than as singular targets that are

economic representations of organizational success. This frame bending could be difficult for many leaders in the organization as it challenges the prevailing vertical structures and academic-corporate binaries, and requires a new way of working and leading in the organization. If the economic benefits are not immediately achievable within the lifespan of a new quality framework, leading to a diminished perception of return on investment, are their more prescient benefits to be realized in the quality framework's potential return on investment for the public good?

This approach will require a considerable amount of time from senior leaders and directors in the organization as it requires changing from the current state to a new fully-realized strategic state, which would require the endorsement of the Board of Governors. The increase on workload across the organization's leadership would be significant, as this approach requires that existing planning and evaluation processes be re-engineered to effectively govern and deploy data for the purposes of measuring quality and influencing college-level decision-making. In that same regard, training and development demands could be significant, as the data literacy of many people across the college is sub-optimal, insofar as the capacity to not only measure, but also to measure what matters, is limited. To that end, the role of the CIO, newly appointed in 2020, increases as they actively engage as a leader in the proposed change solution.

This solution offers the potential for leaders across the organization to come together to work collaboratively and innovatively to improve something they care deeply about — quality, equity, and student success. Frankly, the organization's leaders have not necessarily been led or oriented towards college-level outcomes in this way. But with the energy, vision, and enabling capacity of the leading coalition, and the VPSS as change leader, there is tremendous potential to favourably impact trust, morale, and college culture.

Leadership Ethics and Organizational Change

The relational nature of the leadership approaches and levels in the hybrid social justice leadership framework (see Figure 3) requires that ethical consideration be given to the process through which the OIP will negotiate and reconcile multiple complex, conflicting, and complementary perspectives relating to quality, equity, and student success (Nicholson & Kurucz, 2019). For Metro college in particular, as an organized anarchy characterized by fluid participation among multiple stakeholders who drive the organization, change leaders need to “‘reconstruct value’ . . . and challenge existing measures of organizational ‘success’ and ‘effectiveness’ to include a focus on happiness, well-being, and sustainability as legitimate” (Nicholson & Kurucz, 2019, p. 25).

Given that the OIP attempts to improve college-level outcomes by reorienting organizational perspectives, equity, and student success as relational objects of quality, the inextricable links between the hybrid of moral leadership, transformative educational leadership, and tempered radicalism, and their related questions of ethics and moral action need to be considered (Cunliffe, 2009). Nicholson and Kurucz (2019) propose that in the case of relational leadership, an ethic of care (Gilligan, 2011; Noddings, 2002) helps to guide the ethical considerations arising from a moral problem of the human condition. The ethic of care, for individuals and organizations as ethical leadership actors, “prioritizes the attitude and activities involved in caring as our fundamental human orientation toward, and relationship with, others and the larger society” (Nicholson & Kurucz, 2019, p. 28).

This is particularly appropriate in Metro College’s work to improve outcomes that advance equity and student success, as the work to do so not only focuses on the organization’s human relationship with its students and communities, but also on the human relationships in and among organizational leaders. The ethics of care does not orient leaders towards a source of morality beyond that which emanates from humanization in their relationships (Noddings, 2002). Instead, the ethics of care allows the leader to “consider several different hypotheses and the implications of each when analyzing moral [situations]” (Nicholson & Kurucz, 2019, p. 28). This ethical caring is neither neutral nor

objective and requires continued reflection and development of self-concept (humanitization) to be an ethical actor in the world. The ethic of care emphasizes four key tenets that can be considered in the change process: primacy of relationships; complexity of context; focus on mutual well-being; and engaging the whole person. Nicholson and Kurucz (2019) suggest that using these tenets can surface ethical considerations when enacting leadership as rational, responsible, and relational.

Considering the proposal to develop an integrated, measurable quality framework that advances equity and promotes student success, the ethical tension between the objective instrumentality and subjective humanity needs to be explored. The OIP proposes using the objective tools of a framework and data to evidence equity and success, which are arguably dimensions of the human experience. The ethic of care will help to focus the change process as it negotiates the tensions that arise from discourses and perspectives of the human experience. As a result, these tensions will surface questions that the change leader and the leading coalition must contemplate in framing the change implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and communications plans. Such questions include:

1. How will the change process engage individuals whose lives the framework seeks to improve, to ensure that the framework does not do harm to these very individuals?
2. How are data from multiple sources and methodologies integrated into the sphere of available evidence to ensure that the framework is not reductionist in its presentation of the complexity of the diverse student experience?
3. How can the change process, by virtue of who develops the framework and who is consulted in doing so, endeavour to decolonize traditionally rational approaches to framing quality, to engender progress towards a relationally responsible approach?
4. Given the leadership approach's emphasis on individual praxis among leaders as a means to develop a diverse self-concept to motivate social justice leadership, how is this cultivation of a more human sense of self undertaken with safety, care, and respect?

5. How can the change process ensure that it does not reinforce leader-follower power relations that would reproduce barriers to equity and success for change participants, and the stakeholders whose experience it endeavours to improve?

The approach proposed in the OIP will arguably challenge the college's historically rational approaches to quality, equity, and student success. The change drivers signal that Metro College requires a more human and caring approach to improving quality, such that it shapes favourable outcomes for the organization, its stakeholders, and its community. Leading with values to enact ethical and moral responsibility within the relational approach to leadership in the OIP will help to ensure that the long-term outcomes are scalable and sustainable for Metro College's future. This process will take a significant amount of time, and the return on investment may not immediately present as being economically instrumental. However, the investment in advancing equity and promoting student success through both the college's values and a deeply-held care for the human condition, has the potential to generate inconceivable returns and benefits for the greater good at Metro College.

Chapter 3: Implementation, Evaluation, and Communication

The previous chapter detailed a hybrid theoretical approach that frames the OIP implementation, which can help Metro College improve quality outcomes towards greater equity and student success. While the post-structural analysis of the POP in Chapter 1 might lead to the recommendation that the college enact organizational political resistance and seek to transform corporatized policy and accountability practices, Metro's tightly coupled relationship to the provincial government cannot be averted. The college simply does not have the leadership agency as a publicly-funded institution and agent of the Crown, to ignore or refuse to align with economically instrumental measures of quality — even if they are incongruous with Metro College's cultural and values orientation towards education for the social good. With \$78-million of funding tied to government-determined performance outcomes, the financial risks associated with ignoring or challenging the micro-representations of quality are significant; and doing so could quickly deteriorate the college's reputation and financial capacity to fulfill its long-term strategic vision and objectives.

The opportunity for the college to act as a tempered radical within the post-secondary space — to advance a socially-just, moral agenda from the margins of the college sector — could motivate a gradual transformation in provincial quality and success policy discourses such that they advance equity and student success across the sector. Until that time, however, the college's senior leaders should focus inwardly, to leverage the opportunity to decolonize and sophisticate its internal policies and practices to better align with its evolving organizational moral imperative: to advance equity, to widen access, and to promote student success. Doing so has the potential to concurrently improve organizational performance outcomes to the college's competitive and moral advantages.

The government's policy directive does not concern itself with *how* the college will navigate a path to successful economic outcomes; it is concerned only with the outcomes themselves as singular metrics of quality. Therefore, the proposed solution to the problem of improving outcomes is to develop

an integrated values-driven framework to internally scaffold equity and student success factors to improve performance-based quality outcomes. With that solution in mind, this chapter will further detail the proposed approach to change implementation, evaluation, and communication such that Metro College can realize outcomes that advance equity and promote student success.

Change Implementation Plan

While the college has always attempted to achieve optimal quality outcomes, doing so within a newly coordinated and values-driven framework requires organizational frame-bending (Nadler & Tushman, 1989) that will rejuvenate Metro College's priorities. To make such a change successful, the college's senior leaders need to establish a change-positive climate and clarify the related strategic direction in such a way that the framework supports internal, iterative measurements of equity and student success factors towards improved quality outcomes. This will require that the framework is firmly grounded in the college's LEAD values and principles of access and equity, while enabling the college's strategic innovative and collaborative mindset (Metro College, 2019b).

In their study of effective corporate renewal, Beer et al. (1990) concluded that the most effective senior leaders "recognized their limited power to mandate [organizational] renewal from the top . . . [defining] their roles as creating a climate for change . . . [specifying] the general direction without insisting on specific solutions" (p. 159). Further, they argued that successful change occurred among low- and mid-level layers of the organization where coordinated teamwork, high commitment, and new competencies were anchored in a clear sense of organizational direction. The quality framework at Metro College represents a collaborative approach to measure and operationalize quality, equity, and student success; and doing so will require that senior leaders work as a coordinated team, with a high degree of commitment and evolving leadership competencies (Beer et al., 1990), to set the direction for organizational stakeholders.

Frame-Bending Quality through Leaders

Chapter 2 (see Figure 4) outlined the process of organizational frame-bending (Nadler & Tushman, 1989) in four key stages: initiating, content, leading and achieving. For the purpose of developing and implementing an integrated quality framework, the OIP sets the stage for organizational change in the *initiating and content* phases, having undertaken a diagnosis of the POP, analyzed it within specific contexts, and established an identifiable solution for the path forward. The shared responsibility for leading the change process must now transfer to the VPSS as change leader, and the leading coalition helping to guide the overall process. Collaboration in this group is vital to the change plan, as each provides strategic leadership to key areas of the organization with responsibility for operationalizing policies and processes relating to quality outcomes (see Appendix A). Even though the breadth of responsibility varies across each of the four vice-presidential portfolios, shared investment in advancing a strategic framework for quality is essential.

In the interest of scaling and sustaining change, the participation of other organizational leaders is needed. Within the portfolios of each of the leading vice-presidents, 21 leaders, including deans and directors, will share responsibility for developing and implementing the college-wide quality framework to ensure that related outcomes are harmonized with overall college objectives. Therefore, congruence among leaders in these related portfolios is critical as the leaders within hold responsibility for putting quality into practice. Under the guidance of the leading coalition, bringing this large team of leaders into a community of practice is an important step to engage internal stakeholders in this change initiative. This larger team will reorient the college's approach to quality by frame-bending how quality is understood, described, enacted, measured, and evidenced.

Quality Networked Improvement Community (Q-NIC)

Bryk et al. (2011) argue that “large societal concerns such as improving community college success are complex problems composed of multiple strands . . . that play out over time and often

interact with one another” (p. 129). They further propose that “decomposing this big presenting problem into its constituent component processes” (Bryk et al., 2011 p. 129) is ineffective as it is within the problems of the strands that students can either fail or succeed. Organizational change actors “must be organized in ways that enhance the efficacy of individual efforts, align those efforts, and increase the likelihood that a collection of such actions might accumulate towards efficacious solutions” (Bryk et al., 2011, p. 130). Networked Improvement Communities (NIC) then, emerge to “structure and guide the varied and multiple associated efforts necessary to sustained collective action toward solving complex improvement problems” (Bryk et al., 2011, p. 130).

With the goal of improving college-level outcomes through a new integrated quality framework, the Quality Networked Improvement Community (Q-NIC) at Metro College will involve academic and administrative leaders representing a diverse range of service areas within the organization, including people whose roles relate specifically to advancing equity and student success. It is also desirable for this group to reflect the diversity of social identities represented within the college’s student community. The success of the proposed solution relies heavily on knowledge and data that reside within multiple areas of Metro College. Membership in the Q-NIC, then, will need to include representatives from both the academic and corporate spheres of the organization — as a means to unlock sustained verticals of knowledge and data, and to model innovative and collaborative responsibility for quality, equity and success. This will also engender improved productivity and progress towards change, as integrating these data sources from multiple organizational groups will allow for better evidence to understand the interdependencies among organizational approaches to quality, equity, and student success. Doing so will not only enhance change efficacy (Bryk et al., 2011) by democratizing data and knowledge to the benefit of the organization, but it will also address the notion that innovative problem-solving requires access to and sharing of *sticky information* relating to users

and their contexts —data or information considered to be confidential, sensitive, or proprietary to specific organizational functions (von Hippel, 2005).

The nature of the Q-NIC is such that it is neither an open-membership group, nor a collection of actors who assemble to simply solve a problem by adding to the sum of their component parts. In the case of Metro College, the Q-NIC is intentionally formed, with a very specific goal of articulating an integrated, measurable framework that will favourably shape college-level quality outcomes by internally enabling factors of equity and student success. This is a particularly complex undertaking, as the OIP proposes that the solution is within the domain of interdisciplinary and interprofessional networks across the college. To address this complexity, the Q-NIC membership represents a significant investment of human resources and salary dollars to cultivate this particular solution. The investment is necessary, however, as applied inquiry relating to reform in education has predominantly focused on describing ground-level teaching activity (Bryk et al., 2011), rendering educational reform challenging to measure and scale to the broad benefit of student and organizational success. By focusing on system and policy variables relating to educational reform, the interdisciplinary team of leaders in the proposed Q-NIC have the appropriate leadership agency and influence in the organization to frame-bend critical dimensions of quality to the benefit of the whole organization.

Further to the leadership agency to frame-bend quality at Metro College, the Q-NIC members will need to share a common language, understanding, and allyship relative to social identity, diversity, and equity. While some members may instinctively align with equity discourses by virtue of their personal location and social identity, others may not, and may need to develop shared capacity for leadership change through tempered radicalism. To that end, the Q-NIC will not only need to move through the process of developing the framework, but also through a process of developing relational interdependence and social justice allyship that will help to advance equity and dismantle systemic barriers to student success.

The Q-NIC's scope of work is connected both to financial incentives derived from accountability outcomes, and to outcomes emanating from the Metro College's role in advancing the public good. Further, this level of work offers an opportunity for learning across the college, while working on solutions to problems of student success and equity, which recurrently surface within the distinct organizational siloes and sub-cultures of the college. Therefore, the work is not insignificant; and the community requires a set of "structuring agents . . . [that are] key to unleashing individual creativity, while also advancing joint accountability toward collective problem solving" (Bryk et al., 2011, p. 135). The structuring agents will serve as a mandate or rules of engagement to guide the Q-NIC's activities over time, while iteratively surfacing issues relating to methodology, resources, testing, implementation, and momentum.

Facilitating the Q-NIC

Over the past year, Metro College has engaged with a consultant team to undertake Process Streamlining (PS) and Business Process Reengineering (BPR) projects to surface innovations in student service delivery and student experience as solutions to interlocking tensions and barriers to student success. BPR in particular "asks the fundamental question: Are we doing the right things" (JM Associates, n.d.) to fundamentally rethink and radically reimagine organizational processes to dramatically improve outcomes? Unlike previous experiences with corporate consultants, who focused on externally diagnosing an organizational problem, and then offering a solution, the PS and BPR approaches engage internal stakeholders in the processes of problem analysis, ideation, and solutioning such that options reflect the complexity of the organization. Engaging the consultant team as facilitators, rather than as organizational diagnosticians, has already been well received by leaders and other organizational stakeholders.

The process involves sequestering the assigned Q-NIC members to an intensive workshop, or a series thereof, through which members can focus on creative problem-solving without the distractions

of their everyday responsibilities. Using this consultant team to lead the Q-NIC through the foundational phases of its mandate, and the achieving stage of the frame-bending process will help to drive collaboration and common ground for the group in a manner that does not privilege any one participant as a process-leader over the others. This will further bring the discourses of quality, equity, and student success to a relatively neutral footing within the change process, such that they can be considered through various perspectives. This is a very important component of the process, as unlocking perceptions and representations of organizational power, the monitoring of which are critical variables in the social justice and transformative leadership frameworks illustrated in Figure 3. Appendix C outlines a series of eight sequestered workshops recommended to occur over the first 12 months of the change plan — focusing on key change-leadership activities within the Q-NIC’s four key structuring agents, as outlined in Bryk et al. (2011).

Agent 1: Mapping the problem-solution space. The potential to innovate and integrate multiple creative approaches to advance equity and promote student success exists across the whole organization. The Q-NIC will need to understand the nature of its work relating to quality, equity, and student success, and to map the associated interdependencies as a means to identify existing redundancies and emerging opportunities. Mapping the problem-solution space helps not only to coordinate the problem-solving activity, but also to establish shared accountability relationships among the multiple organizational actors in the Q-NIC working towards the proposed organizational solution.

Agent 2: Forming a shared-language community. Seeing the problem and understanding the discourses that the problem represents across the college’s multiple academic disciplines and administrative domains is an important step in reconciling tensions of ideology and practice. On matters relating to morality, equity, and justice, it is equally important for Q-NIC members to reconcile these same related representations on an individual level. Working from a shared understanding of critical constructs like quality, equity, and student success, will help to advance individual and organizational

self-other agreement (Krishnan, 2003) that will allow all Q-NIC members to enact tempered radical leadership as organizational insiders who lead against the current prevailing neoliberal discourses of quality. This will subsequently allow for leadership interoperability in how the organization leads towards enhanced quality, equity, and student success to the collective goal of improved college-level outcomes.

Agent 3: Setting common targets and measurable ambitious goals. “Shared measurable targets help a community stay focused on what matters” (Bryk et al., 2011, p. 136). To that end, the Q-NIC will need to establish clearly-understood measures that will iteratively demonstrate progress or egress from the desired goals and outcomes. These targets will be used to support a process of praxis —ongoing reflection and action — that underpins the culture of continuous improvement and ongoing humanitization of Metro College that this new approach to quality will help to establish. The quality framework ought not to be too rigid, such that it limits the college’s capacity to respond to the dynamic variables associated with equity and student success. The integrated quality framework for Metro College needs to embed measurement iteratively, so that it can connect evidence across the myriad success factors across the student life cycle that result in more equitable and quality outcomes. Subsequently, the process through which the framework is developed ought to be equally iterative and measurable to facilitate a greater likelihood of scalable implementation.

Agent 4: Establishing common protocols for inquiry. The scalability and sustainability of the Q-NIC’s work across the organization relies upon the extent to which participants share common protocols that “allow [them] to share, test, and generalize local learning” (Bryk et al., 2011, p. 144). The approach ought to be disciplined with the aim that the framework’s development is underpinned by a drive to not only improve upon itself, but also to improve the conditions that relate to its goals and outcomes. So, the Q-NIC’s motivation towards developing the solution can be framed both by the desire of members to improve college-wide quality outcome, and the desire to improve existing organizational relationships

to the benefit of college and stakeholder success. In attempting to frame-bend the organization's understanding of quality, and to activate a values-driven approach to equity and student success, the Q-NIC process must also reflect a correlating commitment to values and rigor. It is worth noting that decolonizing the approaches to quality measurement, particularly by de-emphasizing rational technicism and privileging quantitative constructive methods of knowing, is going to be important for the Q-NIC to work authentically and respectfully to measure equity and student success.

Implementation Plan

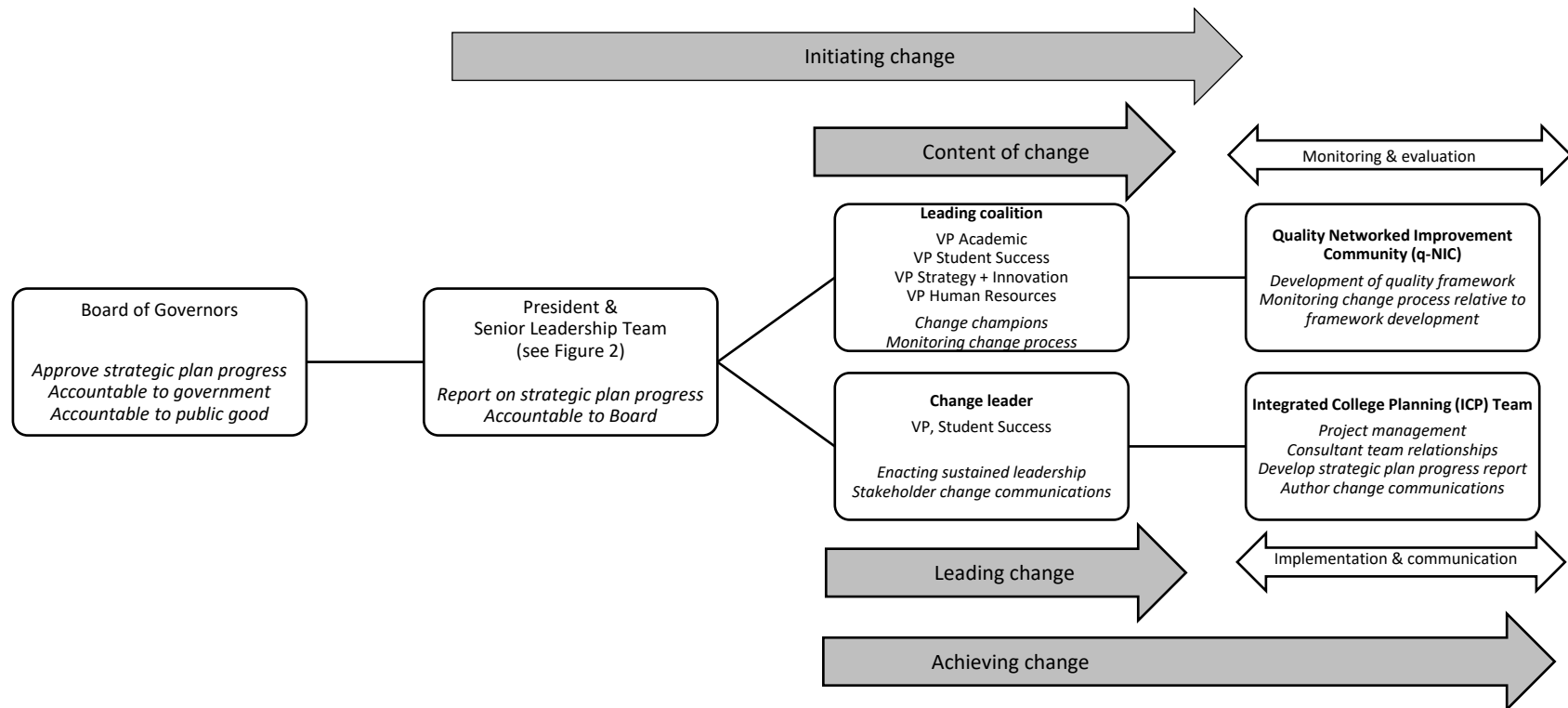
Whelan-Berry and Somerville (2010) suggest that the capacity to achieve and sustain momentum for the change plan will rely on a wide range of factors including the extent to which the change is resourced (knowledge, finances, and people), how the change is communicated and shared among stakeholders, and how outcomes are measured and integrated into continuous planning and improvement. Given the significance of academic excellence and student experience (See Figure 1) to the success of Metro College's strategic plan, the quality framework's integration and operability in overall organizational planning and reporting is critical. Using the new quality framework as a tool to evidence quality and accountability to senior leadership and the Board of Governors will reaffirm its import in helping the college to realize its strategic goals and long-term aspirations. To that end, engaging the college's Integrated College Planning (ICP) Team to project manage the Q-NIC's work and the change implementation arising from the development of the quality framework will help to ensure its integration into long-term strategic planning.

Implementing the change successfully will rely upon a clear understanding of the relationships and responsibilities among stakeholders to the plan. These roles and responsibilities specifically include:

- Leading coalition of four vice-presidents (VPA, VPSS, VPSI, and VPHR) share strategic responsibility for key components of the college's work relative to quality, equity, and student success, and outcomes in the SMA (see Appendix A);

- The VPSS as the change champion is both the OIP author and the senior leader at the college responsible for student success within the new strategic plan;
- The President and senior leadership team, (see Figure 2), including the leading coalition and academic deans, all share leadership responsibility for quality at Metro College;
- The Board of Governors has legislated oversight authority for Metro College and accountability to government and the public;
- The Q-NIC of deans and directors represent the interdisciplinarity needed to integrate and advance quality towards equity and student success;
- The ICP team provides project management to strategic initiatives, prepares quarterly strategy progress reports, and strategic communications.

The relationships among these stakeholders will need to be characterized by the innovative and collaborative mindset signalled in the college's strategic plan. Further, all stakeholders in this process will need to commit to deconstructing vertical siloes that have hindered progress in the past. Finally, the measurement of change implementation, impact, and change communication, will need to flow through this network of stakeholders to engender ongoing commitment and momentum to a new vision for quality at Metro College. The relationships are mapped in Figure 6 along the four stages of Nadler and Tushman's (1989) model of organizational frame bending, and highlighting the key stages of change: implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and communication. While the timelines for the change within the context of the college's three and 10-year plans are yet to be determined, some estimates are provided for the duration of the four stages of the frame-bending plan. The Q-NIC is expected to deliberate over a 12-month period, while implementation, monitoring, and evaluation is expected to unfold over a subsequent 12 to 18-month period.

Figure 6*Change Plan Map: Stakeholder Relationships and Frame Bending*

Note: Nadler and Tushman's (1989) four stages of organizational frame-bending are illustrated with grey arrows. The white boxes depict stakeholder roles, and key leadership responsibilities relative to change implementation are indicated in bold text. Italicized text indicates the nature of change implementation leadership activities among included stakeholders. White double-headed arrows signal the scope of responsibility for change implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and communication.

Implementation Considerations and Risks

Chapter 2 identified the three major drivers behind the change: evolving responsibility to widen access and increase equity; implementation of the college's new strategic plan; and evolution of new senior leadership relationships. The implementation plan must be considered in relationship to these drivers, to determine whether changes to them could jeopardize the plan's potential for success.

The college's work to improve quality and student success cannot be fully realized without understanding and advocating for change to the underlying and interlocking power relations that create systems of oppression and dominance in our communities. Further, this cannot occur without those who seek to be leaders, both as individuals and organizations, engaging in authentic and participatory social justice allyship by critically self-examining their own power and privilege that underpin supremacy, colonialism, and capitalism. Doing so is one of the only ways for the sector to address inequities to students from equity-deserving communities at a systems-level. Over the long term, such changes will inevitably benefit Metro College in myriad ways, not the least of which is improved outcomes for students from equity-deserving groups, and more congruent alignment with community expectations for the college in promoting the public and moral good.

With the Board of Governors having approved the new strategic plan, the vision for Metro College has been established for the next ten years. The three-year strategy of inward-facing improvement only reaffirms the need for the quality framework to be established, and its intended use will position the organization for long-term success in realizing quality outcomes for students. Even if the existing high stakes of performance-based funding policy were to change, and there was less financial pressure associated with college-level outcomes, the path towards greater quality and student success remains at the core of why the college exists and will sustain the quality framework for the long-term.

A change in the evolution of new senior leadership relationships could be the greatest destabilizing variable in the overall change plan. The move towards a values-based quality framework to promote equity and success is driven by the VPSS as the change leader, in partnership with the leading coalition. Similarly, strategic accountability for this mandate rests among the leading coalition and the President. Should there be a change in the scope and structure of any of these roles, or to the incumbents who hold them, the change initiative could potentially be destabilized. However, embedding the quality framework as a tool for accountability to the Board of Governors, and as a strategic priority in the college's 10-year plan, will safeguard it from any negative impact arising from changes in personnel.

Resources

Further to the data and knowledge resources associated with the 21 key members of the Q-NIC, additional resources to successfully develop the integrated quality framework are required. Recognizing that the Q-NIC requires membership commitment for a minimum of one year, and the magnitude of resources needed to engage the leaders identified in Appendix B, additional resources to support this work are required. Specifically, financial resources are needed to engage the consultant team to project manage the process through the ICP team. As previously described, positioning the Q-NIC and the associated change implementation within the context of a college strategic initiative will ensure that this work can be supported by project management and financial resources that exist above and beyond the regular operating budgets of any one organizational division.

Human resources to support the work will also need to be considered. The college has sometimes backfilled leaders who have been seconded to other assignments from within administrative, support staff, and faculty groups who have a desire and potential for workplace professional development. This approach supports organizational talent development and succession planning and could liberate Q-NIC participants to focus on the change project without the additional pressure of their

daily work. However, given that the proposed cadence of the workshops over 12 months (see Appendix C) is designed to facilitate iterative planning, experimentation, monitoring, and evaluation, such secondments may not be required. Further, administrative support for organizing the Q-NIC's work can be situated within the change leader's (VPSS) existing administrative support team and the college's ICP team.

Knowledge resources to support the change initiative are varied. The consultant team will provide resources associated with change management and facilitation. The OIP can serve as a partial discussion paper from which Q-NIC members can map the problem space and advance their work. Additionally, the data resources represented by Q-NIC members in Appendix B are essential to the mix of knowledge that will promote the team's success.

Change Monitoring and Evaluation

The role of monitoring and evaluation is underscored by the accountability policy emphasis on outcomes and performance-based management (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016). The POP of improving college-level quality outcomes is notably complex; and the proposed solution of tasking a Q-NIC to establish an integrated, values-based framework to advance equity and promote student success will help Metro College to achieve its strategic objectives. To ensure the change initiative's success, the approach to change monitoring and evaluation will need to be flexible in its ability to honour and engage dimensions of the social justice leadership approach as detailed in Table 2.

Overall Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

Given its generalizability and practicality, the Markiewicz and Patrick (2016) framework for change monitoring and evaluation will facilitate a path forward such that the proposed solution and its ensuing change initiative will have "a better chance of delivering outcomes that will potentially improve the circumstances for which [it] was developed" (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016, p. 26). The framework will provide overarching guidance to ensure that the Q-NIC progresses purposefully towards the desired

outcome of establishing a college-wide quality framework. To that end, the framework will be grounded in a series of thematic questions that connect the solution to its expectant outcome. The POP statement provides such guidance: With a view towards improving college-level outcomes, then, how can establishing of a values-driven, measurable framework advance equity, and promote student success?

Thematic Questions and Focus

In considering the goal of improving organizational outcomes, the leading coalition will be called upon to articulate a set of evaluation questions that outline key accountabilities for the Q-NIC's work relative to effectiveness, impact, and sustainability (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016). The POP statement signals the types of evaluation questions to be considered:

- How does Metro College *define* quality, equity, and student success?
- To what extent is the framework *intelligible and operable*? How does it enhance stakeholder conceptual and functional understanding of quality, equity, and student success?
- In what ways does the framework *tell the story* of the college's commitment to the principles of academic excellence, and the dimensions of the optimal student experience?
- How are the college's *LEAD values represented* through the framework? To what extent do the values help to reconcile any tensions among discourses relating to quality, equity, and student success? Subsequently, are there discourses or perspectives that are not represented in the framework? If so, why?

To answer these questions, the evaluation and monitoring framework will be developed in a series of five steps (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016).

Identify Requirements. Improving college-level outcomes will inevitably benefit the college's government accountability metrics and associated funding, overall perceptions of student success, and positive impact towards the public good. The framework will need to consider the college's commitments under its Strategic Mandate Agreement (Appendix A), the principles of academic

excellence and dimensions of student experience (Figure 1), and the key priorities outlined in the strategic plan (Metro College, 2019b) to identify the monitoring and measurement requirements.

Determine Participation Arrangements. Key stakeholder participants in monitoring and evaluation will need to represent the college's internal expertise in institutional research, student success, academic quality, government relations, and community partnerships. Their involvement and scope of responsibility will need to be thoughtfully mapped relative to their knowledge and data expertise, and its link to conceptual, operational, and informational outcomes. These areas of knowledge and data expertise are detailed in Appendix B. Further, stakeholder consultations with government, students and community will help to clarify that the evaluation framework measures what matters, and is relevant to how quality, equity, and success, are experienced by students at Metro College.

Identify Possible and Preferred Approaches. A hybrid approach that balances diverse drivers for the quality framework's creation will be undertaken. A rational economic lens will surface a program-theory approach that demonstrates how the processes within the quality framework lead iteratively to improved college-level outcomes. Similarly, a stakeholder-derived social justice approach will help to determine the extent to which the micro-representations of quality embedded in the framework materially advance equity and promote student success.

Review Resource Parameters. College leaders from the departments of information technology, institutional research, and enrollment services will be key collaborators in identifying how existing systems can generate required data. Further allocation of resources will be needed to fill knowledge gaps, specifically those that emerge from the integration of traditionally empirical approaches to measurement, and decolonizing ways of knowing about equity and the student experience. It is expected that expert human resources will be required to map, create, manage, and integrate data that will enable the quality framework to be implemented across the organization. This will require a mixed

methods approach that not only uses existing positivist data and analytics about students, such as demographic data and academic achievement data, but also uses qualitative data sources that reflect the complexity of equity and student success that are central to enacting a new approach to quality outcomes.

Confirm Purpose and Parameters. Ongoing review of the framework by the leading coalition, Q-NIC members, and representative stakeholder groups is required to ensure that the evolution and implementation of the quality framework is successful. Such stakeholders include representatives from equity-deserving groups and their allies, to ensure authenticity, respect, and relevance for the framework’s development and implementation. This continuous review will anchor a connection between the framework and its capacity to help the college advance equity, promote success, and improve quality.

Change Monitoring Plan

The change monitoring plan will focus both on the *process* of the Q-NIC’s work, and the *progress* made in positioning the college towards improved outcomes. The social justice leadership approach to change (see Table 2) situates the work of the Q-NIC relative to the OIP’s emphasis on transformative leadership, moral leadership, and tempered radicalism. In particular, the approach positions the Q-NIC to improve college-level outcomes by:

- implementing and measuring activities relating to quality, equity, and student success through a college-wide framework;
- leveraging diversity of social identity and social justice allyship of Q-NIC participants and among associated leaders to align and reconcile personal values and morals to develop a self-other agreement (Krishnan, 2003) to “understand, accept, integrate, and subsequently own and lead [social justice] change” (Nadler & Tushman, 1989, p. 202);

- enacting self-other agreement as a leader through ongoing stages of change meaning-making to transform planning, policies, programs, and practices at the sub-group (divisional) level that the Q-NIC participants lead in the organization.

To achieve this position relative to social justice, the seven phases of organizational reorientation in the achieving-change stage of frame bending (Nadler & Tushman, 1989) should be considered as an iterative, integrated, and innovative reflection process through which the Q-NIC and its participating leaders will come to a more critical consciousness of the self as a social justice leader. The seven phases include: awareness, experimentation, understanding, commitment, education, application, and integration. The monitoring plan will position the Q-NIC to move through these seven phases iteratively, so that the values-based framework can then be tested and implemented by Q-NIC participants as change facilitators within their respective departments and divisions across Metro College. Just as these seven stages of change reorientation are required for the new quality framework to be operable, principles of equity, justice, and access need to be equally reoriented in the minds and experiences of the change facilitators in order for the framework's implementation to be authentic.

Establishing the Monitoring Plan

Given that the Q-NIC includes deans and directors from across the organization, it is proposed that the Q-NIC collaborates with the consultant team to collectively establish the monitoring plan and its criteria, as these leaders will be ultimately responsible for facilitating and implementing the change within their respective departments and spheres of leadership influence. The plan will, of course, need to be endorsed by the leading coalition; however, situating the monitoring plan's development in the Q-NIC will facilitate greater endorsement of the associated output, outcome, and impact benchmarks, and account for the broad representations of quality, equity, and student success across the organization. Markewicz & Patrick (2016) frame the monitoring plan in four key steps.

Identify Focus. Q-NIC members will identify areas of focus that emerge from the evaluation questions established by the leading coalition. Particular attention to the themes of *definition, intelligibility and operability, story-telling, and values representation* is recommended.

Develop Performance Indicators and Targets. Q-NIC members will partner with the consultant team to map approaches to benchmarking quality, equity, and student success. The process of doing so must also allow for the critical review of how existing approaches may privilege certain discourses and practices over others such that they reproduce systemic barriers and inequities. New indicators and targets, including those generated through anti-colonial ways of knowing, will need to be identified.

Identify Data-Collection Processes and Tools. Given the myriad data sources available to Q-NIC members by virtue of their professional areas, the existing processes and tools to gather and synthesize quantitative and qualitative data will be mapped and integrated. The extent to which the associated data processes and tools reaffirm structural barriers will need to be identified and remedied through an anti-colonial and anti-oppression perspective. This active reflection on decolonizing data collection will be an expectation of all Q-NIC members, but will be led by key stakeholders from the college's equity and Indigenous Education offices. Stakeholder consultations with members of equity-deserving groups and their internal organizational allies will help to ensure that data and knowledge is more equitably and democratically represented in the process.

Determine Responsibilities and Time Frames. With the large size of the Q-NIC comes an opportunity to divide the responsibilities of developing the values-based framework into component parts. Some members of the Q-NIC could be assigned to subgroups to focus on monitoring, evaluation, and communications. This will afford members to step aside from the content of the quality framework, to reflect upon, understand, and improve the processes through which they are developing the framework itself. This centres their knowledge, experience, agency, and organizational leadership capital as vital assets in this process. The consultant team will need to co-create project management

timelines and tools that will enable collaboration and innovation in how the Q-NIC delivers on its mandate.

Monitoring Through Praxis

Ongoing action and reflection are significant to the process of developing a self-other concept for social justice leadership, and to the process of continuous improvement for organizational change that is grounded in a desire to advance equity. This leadership praxis is further cultivated by both the frame-bending approach in its ongoing experimentation with new understandings of quality, equity, and student success, and by the iterative sequencing of Q-NIC workshops over the first 12 months of the change plan (see Appendix C). As a result, monitoring through self-reflection, and through “the social interactions [in which] humans engage as a source of change” (Kezar, 2018, p. 90), is substantively and temporally embedded in the Q-NIC’s work such that participant leaders can further cultivate their change leadership practice. This will also bolster the participants’ individual and collective agency as a transformative community of practice (Kezar & Gehrke, 2015) that will share responsibility for change facilitation beyond the first 12-18 months of the change plan — a variable in ensuring the proposed organizational change is scalable and sustainable (Kezar, 2015). Different characteristics of leadership communities proposed by Wenger et al. (2002) and Cox (2004) ought to be considered by both the leading coalition and the consultant team in creating the relationship foundation for the Q-NIC.

Monitoring Through Leadership Accountability

Given the size of the Q-NIC and the breadth of its members’ organizational experience and background, it is recommended that the leading coalition not intervene too heavily in the Q-NIC’s work. The proposed leadership and change approaches necessitate a balance of personal and professional work to be undertaken by Q-NIC participants to transform the college’s outcomes for quality, equity, and student success. This can sometimes be personally exposing or risky work that requires high degrees of psychological safety among participants. Rather than being intimately involved in oversight, the

leading coalition (including the change leader) should meet monthly with the consultant team and ICP Team project manager to monitor the Q-NIC's progress towards outcomes anchored in the evaluation framework questions. The proposed approach within the solution is expected to generate creativity and collaboration among members such that they organically produce momentum and outcomes towards scalable and sustainable change to the betterment of the college. Formal and informal tools and processes to provide feedback will need to be established.

Change Evaluation Plan

Using data gathered through the change monitoring plan, the evaluation plan aims to address questions about the change solution in two domains: *quality* and *value*. Markiewicz and Patrick's (2016) framing of these concepts can be described within the context of the OIP:

- *Quality* is determined by evidence and experience and relates to the intrinsic merit of the values-based framework relative to Metro College's capacity to improve quality, equity, and student success outcomes. Quality shows how the framework helps the college (as operationalized through its people, processes, and policies) to improve outcomes;
- *Value* is the extrinsic worth, significance, and benefit of the framework to key stakeholders, including the Board of Governors, industry partners, funders, and government. Value shows how the framework helps the college to demonstrate its capacity to improve outcomes such that they meet the specific and diverse needs of stakeholders.

An additional third domain is central to the evaluation plan for this OIP — the *impact* of the college-wide framework to its primary beneficiaries: economic instrumentality of accountability outcomes, and the public good of Metro College and its community. The quality framework aims to not only improve outcomes for students, but also for the communities Metro College serves. As such, assessing value alone is insufficient, as the stakeholders for whom value is important are still removed from the centrality of the college's mission to turn learning into opportunity. It is therefore proposed that impact

is an amplification of value, insofar as its measurement addresses both how the framework helps to meet the needs of students and community as stakeholders, and why that is important to the stakeholders' experiences and the organizational mission and vision.

Establishing the Evaluation Plan

Given the evaluation plan's focus on scaffolding evidence from the monitoring plan relative to the evaluation questions, it is proposed that the consultant team facilitate a process through which the leading coalition and the Q-NIC can co-create the evaluation plan. Doing so will represent both a symbolic and functional turning point through which the senior leaders affirm the work of senior managers by participating in the process of positioning the quality framework for success. It will also engage the Q-NIC members in their roles as change facilitators in such a way that they can deepen their commitment to the change solution and initiative and engage their departmental teams more deeply in this work. Markiewicz & Patrick (2016) offer five steps to establish the evaluation plan.

Determine Overall Evaluation Approach. The approach should be characterized by the hybrid of conceptual and theoretical frameworks that underpin the OIP, in order to balance key stakeholder interests and strategic priorities. Given the interest of government, students, and community in the goal of improved college-level outcomes, the approach will need to consider how the quality framework facilitates transformative leadership, moral leadership, and tempered radicalism actions as illustrated in Table 2.

Identify Evaluation Questions Requiring Criteria and Standards. Having articulated a series of thematic questions, the leading coalition will set the parameters for continued evaluation of the solution. The monitoring plan will need to consider functional dimensions of the college's quality framework (definition, intelligibility and operability, story-telling, and values representation). The evaluation plan will then need to integrate evidence of these functional dimensions into an enhanced

understanding of the extent to which it facilitates improvement in college-level outcomes. At this point, evaluation questions that measure the solution's quality, value and impact will need to be developed.

Identify Focus of Evaluation and Methods. The complexity of the problem of practice, and its proposed solution, cannot be ignored. As such, evaluation will need to be continuous, and use mixed methods over an extended period of time. Evaluation sequencing and interdependence will consider the relational nature among desired outcomes of quality, equity, and student success. For example, will the college achieve equity and student success through quality, and as such ought *quality* be evaluated as a priority? Alternately, are quality and student success products of equity, and therefore should the evaluation plan consider *equity* as its focus? Or does an emphasis on evaluating *student success* produce greater quality and equity outcomes? Arguably, the relationships among these outcomes are not linear, and the methods undertaken to evaluate the framework's progress ought to reflect this. "Methods need to provide data that allow the evaluator to draw conclusions, based on what is identified as a reasonable causal connection between the program actions and its results" (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016, p. 238).

Determine Responsibilities and Timeframes. The design of Q-NIC membership is such that it broadly represents the interdisciplinary focus of Metro College's academic divisions and supporting administrative functions, as well as the diverse interprofessional expertise within the organization. Members are not only content experts, but they are also process experts relative to the leading discourses of quality, equity, and student success (see Appendix B). As such, when the Q-NIC evolves from its role of developing the quality framework to facilitating its implementation, it is suggested that the team be organized to include a community of practice with responsibility for evaluation. Leveraging the investment in the change solution through the framework's design, this community of practice will promote the change's further scalability and sustainability through ongoing evaluation.

Review Monitoring and Evaluation Plans. With shared accountability and leadership in the leading coalition, the VPA and VPSS will take on responsibility for the continuous review of the

monitoring and evaluation plans. These senior leaders hold the shared mandates for quality and student success and hold the greatest leadership stake in the performance outcomes as defined by the SMA (see Appendix A). They will have to work to integrate the college-wide framework into the everyday practice of their divisions and the organization as a whole.

Plan to Communicate the Need for Change and the Change Process

Metro College's strategic plan (2019b) heralds the organizational values of learner-centredness, excellence, accountability, and diversity. Schein (2004) proposes that organizations with learning cultures need to commit to transparent and open communication, even when plans and outcomes are not yet completely clear and derive strength and momentum by responding to criticism. Further, Kezar (2018) proposes that people are engaged in an ongoing process of making meaning about themselves and the world around them, and that in order to motivate second-order change in higher education, a process of individual and organizational sensemaking is necessary. Kezar's emphasis on sensemaking relies heavily on communication strategies, processes, and tools to cultivate new ways of organizational understanding and being through social, continuous, and reflective means. That being the case, the communications plan for Metro College's development and implementation of a values-driven framework to improve college-level outcomes will emphasize sensemaking relating to equity and student success as an underlying condition for organizational learning and transformation.

Building Awareness

Beatty (2015) suggests that the adoption of a new future organizational view is predicated by ensuring that stakeholders have a clear understanding of "the *why*, *what* and *how* of the change" (p. 1). The analysis of the problem of practice signals *why* it is important for Metro College to advance a college-wide quality framework in ensuring organizational success. The strategic plan (Metro College, 2019b) aspires to a vision for *what* the college's work intends to become, by integrating principles of academic excellence and dimensions of student experience (see Figure 1). And the Q-NIC's undertaking

to develop a college-wide quality framework indicates how the organization will achieve improved organizational outcomes. Nevertheless, the change leader will need to engage in thoughtful communication planning with the ICP team to build awareness about this change initiative so as to increase understanding and critical discussion among stakeholders as a means to deepen investment in the organizational future state.

The social justice leadership model (see Figure 3) should inform awareness-building strategies to propel the change forward. Consideration of the level of discourse around the change and related leadership approaches (see Table 2) can also allow the change leader to map various awareness-building and communications strategies to signal that Metro College is indeed changing. Examples of communication strategies and approaches to awareness-building according to the social justice leadership model are found in Appendix D.

Establishing the Change Communication Plan

Beatty (2016) proposes a model of organizational change communication that centres ongoing feedback and continuous improvement as a vital component in establishing and deepening college stakeholder investment in the move towards an integrated quality framework. Beatty emphasizes that the communication strategy ought to be considered in the early stages of the change implementation plan, as iterative feedback from stakeholders can also refine and advance the change throughout its life cycle. The communication plan development will unfold relative to questions that surface in considering six aspects of the change communications model.

Roles and Responsibilities

The move to establish and implement a college-wide framework for quality, equity, and student success impacts stakeholders across the organization, and most notably those whose work is situated within the leadership of the leading coalition. While the change solution will be administratively nested within the project management and communications team of the ICP Team and the office of the VPSS

(the change leader), the responsibility for communicating the change lives primarily with the VPSS, and with the support of the leading coalition. With that in mind, Metro College's corporate communications team, in partnership with the ICP team and college communications team, will support and implement the communications strategy. This will ensure that messaging is targeted to internal stakeholders' investment in value and quality of the change solution, and external stakeholders' investment in quality and impact. It will also facilitate access to the broadest inventory of communications channels and tools, both internal and external, through which to drive coordinated messaging.

Guidelines and Objectives

Overarching objectives will help to guide the ways that the change project is communicated to stakeholders. The objectives should provide guidelines in three key areas:

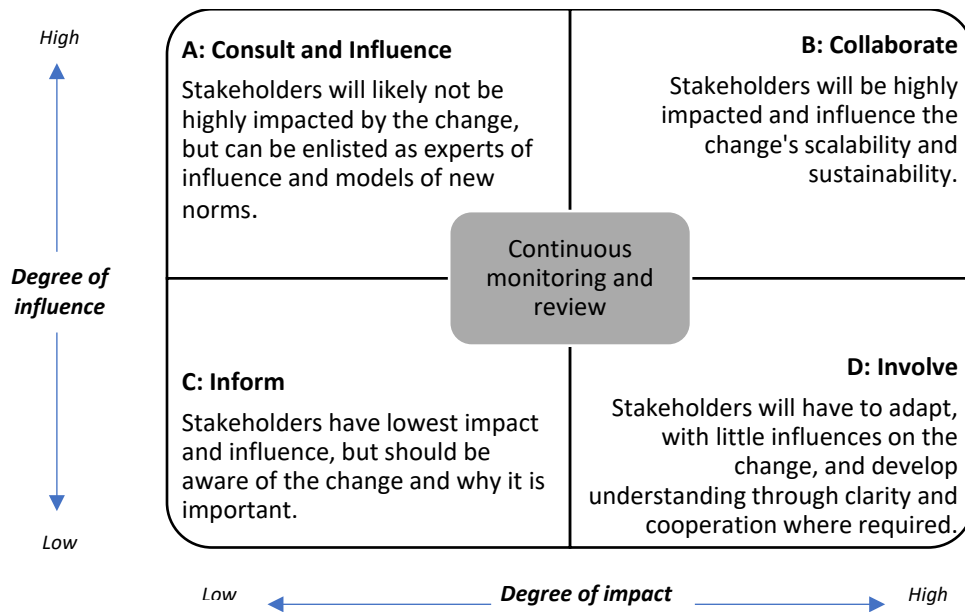
1. *Function*: how often, in what sequence, and using which tools and channels will messages be communicated?
2. *Values*: how will the messaging be clear, transparent, inclusive, and reflective of feedback? How will it reflect Metro College's LEAD values?
3. *Themes*: how will messaging affirm key priorities and issues as identified through the OIP? How will communications promote sensemaking relating to equity? How will they consistently enhance understanding and operability of quality, equity, and success?

Further to these three key areas, particular guidelines should emerge from the intersection of leadership discourses and leadership approaches illustrated in Table 2, to ensure that there is consistency and integrity in the overall messaging (see Appendix D). For example, at the level of ideas, and across the three leadership approaches, how does the college communicate about systemic inequities in the college sector in a manner that is appropriate for government, for aligned stakeholders, and for community? The layers of the leadership approach and the stakeholder audience need to be carefully considered.

Stakeholder Analysis

Flowing from objectives and guidelines, the change leader and communications team will need to analyze how to engage in stakeholder communications. Mapping stakeholders relative to their degrees of influence to the success of the change, their current interest and potential investment in the change, and the approach to be undertaken will take ample time. The communications plan should also attend to the internal stakeholder interests of value and quality, and external stakeholder interests of quality and impact. This will help to inform the ways that evidence from the monitoring and evaluation plan can be leveraged to propel the change forward and demonstrate desired outcomes. Examples of key stakeholders to be considered within the scope of this OIP are provided in Appendix E.

Following the stakeholder inventory, they will need to be organized into groups by degree of influence and impact. Beatty (2015) proposes plotting stakeholders onto a four-quadrant map where they can be clustered according to common communications strategies, guidelines, and objectives. It is important to consider their influence and impact both in relationship to the change and the college, and their position and interests as a stakeholder. The leading coalition may perceive a greater impact than that in which the stakeholder has actual interest. Therefore, using the map as a dynamic tool will be important over the lifespan of the change, as impact and influence can evolve relative to the timing and sophistication of the change initiative's implementation. Not unlike the iterative approach that is expected from the quality framework, the continuous improvement of the monitoring and evaluation plan, and the sensemaking within Metro College's culture, the communications framework needs to be aligned in its commitment to ongoing reflection and action. Figure 7 depicts the stakeholder map with descriptions of their relative characteristics.

Figure 7*Stakeholder Impact and Influence Map*

Note: Adapted from Beatty, 2015, p. 8.

Effective Messages

The levels of discourse and leadership approaches in Table 2 can again serve as a guide with which stakeholders can address three sets of questions:

1. Why is the creation of a college-wide framework for quality, equity, and success important to me and to Metro College? And why is it important now?
2. How does the college-wide framework help to mobilize Metro College towards what it strives to become, and what role do I play? What is my valence as a stakeholder?
3. How will Metro College get to its desired state, and what is expected of or being asked of stakeholders to help the college turn learning into opportunity?

Beatty (2015) argues that communication interests between change leaders and their audience are often reversed. Change leaders tend to focus on the disadvantages of the status quo and the

advantages of the change, while the audience tends to consider the advantage of the status quo and the disadvantage of the change. Consequently, understanding and messaging both the supportive and counter-supportive evidence through the evaluation plan is critical. This will help to localize the message content, which can again evolve in accordance with the map presented in Figure 7, relative to the stakeholder's standpoint and discourse on the matters of quality, equity, and success.

Impactful Tools

By virtue of including both the ICP project management team and communications team in change implementation oversight, the widest collection of communication tools and modalities can be leveraged to share and receive information about the move towards improved college-level outcomes. During the development of its strategic plan, for example, Metro College employed a digital platform to engage over 6000 individuals from broad internal and external stakeholder groups in the planning process (Metro College, 2019b). Given the success of this platform, and the OIP's nesting within the college's strategy and ICP team, the continued use of the platform for ongoing community feedback will help to engender a sense of continuity, connection, and eventual completion of this important work relative to the strategy.

In addition to a digital platform, the existing committee structure within the college can be used to provide updates and seek input. This presents an important confluence to the communications plan as an enabler of monitoring and evaluation. A harmonized approach across the monitoring, evaluation and communications plans will also help to facilitate consistency and connection across messaging and through sensemaking. Committees that are legislated by the province (Government of Ontario, 2002) include the Board of Governors, the College Advisory Council, Indigenous Peoples' Education Circle (IPEC), and Program Advisory Committees (PAC). Additionally, ad hoc committees that represent the interests of equity-deserving communities and other key stakeholders are important touchpoints for

electronic and face-to-face communication about the college's coordinated work towards quality, equity, and success.

Trusted Messengers

Given that stakeholder communication can both be formal and informal, ensuring that trusted and credible messengers are in place is critical to the change initiative's success. Beatty (2015) advises that messengers have access to training and tools to ensure that they are believed and trusted by their audiences. While research shows that communication through senior and line managers can be most effective in delivering change-related information (Allen et al., 2007; Holt et al., 2003; Larkin & Larkin, 1996), Metro College is contending with an organizational culture shift to deconstruct previously-held organizational siloes that such hierarchical approaches may reproduce and reinforce.

In the interest of facilitating organizational sensemaking (Kezar, 2015), stakeholders identified as collaborators and influencers (see Figure 7, Quadrants B and A) provide high-level strategic information from which a network of leaders across the organization — regardless of hierarchical rank — can engage in ongoing discussion about the collective move to improve quality, equity, and success. Providing these influencers, who may also hold leadership in related stakeholder groups, with a communications playbook to keep critical conversations that support meaning-making and the development of self-concept — both organizationally and individually — will be a powerful opportunity to engage and involve individuals in change leadership roles across the organization. For individuals who lack clarity of influence, impact, or personal valence relative to the change initiative, using this network of change communication ambassadors to both inform and involve (see Figure 7, Quadrant D) and seek feedback from these stakeholders will be nonetheless valuable.

Continuous Improvement

Using digital tools and platforms will help to clarify the extent to which the messaging reaches and is understood by its intended audience. Analytics embedded in these tools can speak to their

operational efficiency, but neglect to describe impact. Knowing that a stakeholder opened a digital communication is one thing; but how they received and responded to the message's content is something else to be considered. A team of change communicators from within the Q-NIC can be key informants in helping the change leader and leading coalition to determine if they have an accurate pulse of stakeholder sensemaking.

Additionally, grounding the messaging in a commitment to process improvement and organizational sensemaking is an important way to signal the leaders' openness to feedback and input. Kezar (2018) emphasizes how various vehicles for learning and sensemaking can propel a change forward. Specifically, she proposes that openness to and integration of new ideas, facilitating distribution and use of information, creating groups to explore multiple perspectives, appreciating dissonance and doubt, and valuing mistakes are all important dimensions to this process. These same dimensions underpin the ways that the monitoring and evaluation framework proposes to support the change initiative; and they are enablers of Metro College's values of learner-centredness, excellence, accountability, and diversity.

With that in mind, the conditions that the OIP and the values-driven framework endeavours to change are quality, equity, and success. Given the theoretical and conceptual frameworks considered, one cannot advance any of these conditions without some form of praxis. Whether it is named as continuous improvement, sensemaking, or evidence-informed practice, the ongoing and underlying processes of individual and organizational learning are central to the authenticity and relevance of messages communicated through the change — and as a result, are likely to motivate collective momentum and collaboration towards a new realization of college-level outcomes at Metro College.

Next Steps and Considerations

Within the context of neoliberal policies that reinforce the economic instrumentality of quality in post-secondary education, Metro College is contending with an opportunity to shift the dominant

discourses that shape college outcomes, equity, and student success. Inherent tensions between government accountability and the college's social contract for the public good create a space for social justice to be enacted across the organization to shape the college's leadership at the sector, organizational, and individual levels. Examining quality, equity, and student success through moral, transformative, and tempered radical leadership has highlighted the opportunity for Metro College to frame-bend its approach to improving quality outcomes by focusing internally on advancing equity and student success. The iterative process proposed in the OIP is a long-term investment for the college's future and requires the continuous negotiation of neoliberal and post-structural representations of quality, equity, and success across the whole organization, its leaders, and its constituent stakeholders.

The proposal to develop an integrated, measurable quality framework that will improve college-level outcomes while advancing equity and promoting student success suggests a new way of collaborative and relational leadership at Metro College. The organizational analysis signals that a new approach to how quality is enacted by the college and through the relationships of its leaders is needed. The college seems to be ready for this type of change but doing so will require a leap of faith given that the return on investment of the solution is not immediately economically instrumental, but ultimately in the best interest of Metro College's social contract for the public good.

To take this leap of faith, a number of next steps and considerations are needed. The OIP maps the path forward and identifies the critical leadership capacity of the VPSS as change leader, and his coalition with the VPA, VPSI, VPHR as key partners in organizational success. Strengthening the shared knowledge and leadership capital among this leading coalition is needed to sustain the momentum necessary to fuel the change. Using the critical analysis in the OIP to make the case for change with the senior leadership team is also needed. Early discussions about quality, equity, and student success among the senior leadership team indicate that there is a conceptual will to move forward in an integrated and collective manner. However, fully discussing and fleshing out the opportunities and

compromises for leaders and their constituent stakeholders in the previously siloed organization is a necessary step in engendering trust and confidence in the team's capacity to support this level of change. At the same time, how can this best occur when, as the OIP is being written, the college will transition its presidency to a new leader for the organization?

The ethic of care signals that engaging constituent stakeholders, largely students from equity-deserving populations and their internal organizational allies, in a process of understanding how Metro College will coalesce economic drivers with those of the human and social good, is an important step in taking responsible relational leadership for change in the organization. The college cannot ethically seek to dismantle systemic barriers to engagement and success without the reciprocal support of these communities. The change leader and the leading coalition will need to consider how to meaningfully engage these communities through change implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and communication, in a manner that does not burden them with the emotional labour of having to produce solutions to problems of the dominant culture. Given the intensity with which organizations are currently working to advance efforts to address racism, colonialism, white supremacy, and misogyny, the leadership resources available from communities who have historically experience related systemic barriers can be limited. So, how can Metro College, in a manner that is caring, respectful, and reciprocal *do with* these communities, as opposed to *doing for* these communities — but in a way that centres the college's responsibility as a representation of systemic hegemony to undo the interlocking systems of power and privilege that have created inequity in post-secondary education?

These are profoundly ethical and moral considerations for Metro College. For the OIP to be successful, leaders across the organization will need to reach within themselves, reach across to their colleagues, and reach out to the diverse communities they serve, to develop a more complex understanding of the self as a social justice leader that is integral to anti-oppression, anti-colonial, and tempered radical work. However, never losing sight of the organization's LEAD values, its history and

roots in access and the community, and the tempered radicalism of its namesake will undoubtedly motivate leaders now and into the future to reorient, frame bend, and transform quality such that the college can advance equity and promote student success.

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Appendix A: Performance Metrics for Metro College (2020-2025)

Government priority	Metric	Metric set by	Percentage of funding	Estimated share of \$78M annual funding	Leading coalition responsibility
Skills and job outcomes	Graduate employment earnings	Government	5%	\$3.9M	VPA, VPSS
	Experiential learning	Government	10%	\$7.8M	VPA, VPSS
	Skills and competencies	Government	5%	\$3.9M	VPA, VPSS
	Graduate employment rate in a related field	Government	10%	\$7.8M	VPA, VPSS
	Institutional strength/focus	College	20%	\$15.6M	VPA, VPSS, VPSI
	Graduation rate	Government	5%	\$3.9M	VPA, VPSS
Economic and community impact	Apprenticeship capacity	Government	5%	\$3.9M	VPA, VPSI
	Industry & research funding	Government	5%	\$3.9M	VPA, VPSI
	Community/local impact of student population	College	20%	\$15.6M	VPA, VPSS
	Institutional economic impact	College	15%	\$11.7M	VPA, VPHR, VPSI
Productivity, accountability, and transparency	Faculty activity and compensation	Government	Not tied to funding		VPA, VPHR

Note: Vice-President, Academic (VPA); Vice-President, Student Success (VPSS); Vice-President, Strategy & Innovation (VPSI); Vice-President Human Resources (VPHR). Data included from *2020–2025 Strategic Mandate Agreement*, Government of Ontario, 2020. [Citation withheld for anonymization purposes].

Appendix B: Metro College Quality Networked Improvement Community (Q-NIC) Membership

Stakeholder Area	Knowledge	Sample Data
Academic centres	Academic programs and outcomes Industry trends and labour projections	Course-level student outcomes
Faculty development	Trends and excellence in teaching and learning	Faculty engagement rates
Academic quality	Program quality standards and accountability requirements Academic program viability	College and program-level audit
Experiential learning	Industry needs and the future of work	Engagement and completion rates Quantity and quality of EL experiences
Indigenous education	Decolonizing approaches to learning and success	Engagement rates Indigenous ways of knowing
Student affairs	Student psychosocial development, career development experiences	Service engagement rates Co-curricular learning outcomes
Academic support services	Student learning and development experiences	Service engagement rates Co-curricular learning outcomes
Equity & human rights	Equity-deserving community experiences and priorities	Student demographic data
Institutional research	Standards of research and measurement	College KPIs
Registrar & enrollment services	College and provincial policy and accountability requirements	Enrollment data Student demographics Student academic records
Strategy and planning	College strategic plan integration Annual departmental business plans Project management	College strategic plan monitoring and reporting
Research	Industry research partnerships Student applied-research projects	Engagement rates
Partnerships office	Equity-deserving community needs Partnerships for the public good Pathway programs	Partnership outcomes
Marketing and recruitment	Prospective student market demographics	Prospective student data
Information technology	System integration and information management approaches	Student data and analytics

Appendix C: Quality Networked Improvement Community (Q-NIC) Workshop Sequencing

Stage of organizational Frame-bending (Nadler & Tushman, 1989)	Workshop Focus of Networked Improvement Community (Bryk et al., 2011)	Timeline
Awareness	Understanding the POP and the current state of quality, equity, and success.	Within first month of Q-NIC creation.
	Articulate Q-NIC mandate.	
	Developing and articulating leadership self-concept as it relates to equity (Krishnan, 2003) and tempered radical leadership (Meyerson, 2001).	Month 2 and 3
	Mapping organizational values and culture.	
Experimentation	Forming shared language community relative to quality, equity, and student success	Month 4
	Understanding the OIP and refining the proposed implementation plan.	
	Identifying implementation targets and benchmarks and outcomes.	
	Ongoing reconciliation of self-concept and social justice allyship.	Months 5, 7, 9, 11.
	Q-NIC members experimenting with integration of discourses, policies, processes and technologies of quality and success within home departments/domains with related stakeholders.	
	Re-engaging formally with Q-NIC to evolve the framework in accordance with outcomes of experimentation	
	Ongoing reconciliation of self-concept and social justice allyship.	

Appendix D: Change Communications Examples

Leadership level	Leadership Approach		
	<i>Transformative educational leadership</i>	<i>Moral leadership</i>	<i>Tempered Radicalism</i>
<i>Ideas</i> Advancing access & equity as a leader in the college sector	Question policy makers and government in consultations on performance-based funding about the relationship between economic, social, and systemic drivers of quality, success, and equity.	Embed equity and values-derived outcomes in the college's Strategic Mandate Agreement (SMA).	Collaborate with other equity-focused stakeholders, including industry and funders, to articulate a new social discourse on quality, success and equity that advances the common good.
<i>Group</i> College strategic plan	Build and bolster understanding of the relational nature of quality, equity, and student success in the Board of Governors.	Engage with equity-driven internal stakeholders (unions, student government, equity-focused groups) to consult on the approach and share the path forward.	Foreground and privilege equity-promoting discourses and outcomes in relation to all strategic priorities and objectives, particularly those relating to indigenization and anti-racism.
<i>Individual</i> Evolving leadership relationships	Senior leaders communicate and drive change among stakeholder networks and advocacy groups that respond to and influence public policy.	Broadly communicate and create social space for internal stakeholders to engage in relational sensemaking (Kezar, 2018) to propel and sustain organizational change.	Foreground and prioritize voices, bodies, and experiences from equity-deserving groups in formal and informal leadership spaces across the organization.

Note: The communications and awareness-building framework is grounded in Rottman's (2007) hybrid framework for social justice leadership that frames the OIP through lenses of moral leadership, transformative educational leadership, and tempered radicalism.

Appendix E: Sample Stakeholder Communications Inventory

Internal stakeholders	External stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employees (administrative, support, academic) • Employees as represented by discipline or professional identity • Program Advisory Committees • Indigenous Education Council • Equity & anti-racism advisory committee • Colleges and universities with program articulation agreements and other partnerships • Accrediting agencies and regulatory bodies • Board of Governors • Current students as general student body • Current students as formally represented by equity-deserving communities • Industry partners as hosts of experiential learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government leaders • Provincial government officials • Non-governmental funding agencies • Lobbying organizations and networks • Unions (student, faculty, support staff) • Industry partners (employers and research) • Accountability agencies • Prospective students, alumni, and influencers • Other colleges and universities • General public, especially those from equity-deserving groups