

**EARLY CHILDHOOD
EDUCATORS OF BC
STRATEGY SESSION
JULY 27, 2007**



Developing a strategy for professional
leadership

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Executive Summary

The Early Childhood Educators of BC (ECEBC) held a strategic planning session on Friday July 27, 2007 to examine professional leadership in the field both from an individual and a societal impact perspective.

Through an inclusive and collaborative model, the group responded to an open statement, 'To ensure professional leadership is embodied within the early childhood education (ECE) field, we need to pay attention to . . .' thus formulating up to 60 agenda items for further discussion. This report provides a transcription of over 20 dialogue sessions on key topic areas from the agenda.

Key actions that arose from the planning session includes: ECEBC will build a strategic professional leadership plan; ECEBC will revisit what has been done around professionalism, do a scan currently, build and move forward; and ECEBC will ensure that professional development opportunities are comprehensive and strategic.

ECEBC has the task of ensuring a strategic plan is developed and there was universal commitment from participants to be a voice back in their home communities.

ECEBC Strategy Session

Developing a strategy for professional leadership

Setting the Context

The Early Childhood Educators of BC (ECEBC) have entered into a funding agreement with Vancity Community Foundation with \$2 million in funding from the Ministry of Children and Family Development. The dollars are to be used for professional development. Due to this opportunity, ECEBC held a strategic planning session on Friday July 27, 2007 with over thirty-five leaders and activists in the early childhood community. The goal was to examine professional leadership in the field both from an individual and a societal impact perspective.

The day was conducted in large and small interactive circles designed through a group alliance that supported:

- Small group discussions
- Openness to all perspectives
- A responsibility to be heard, have a voice and to listen
- An increased understanding of each other's similarities and differences and the assumptions that are made
- A responsibility to take the day's learning and spirit back to individual communities
- An awareness and appreciation of the expertise around the circle

During introductions, participants summarized what was alive in them professionally, which alternatively became the foundation for building professional leadership in all:

- Authenticity
- Passion
- Congruence
- Humour
- Personal and professional balance

The Circle – Black Elk (quoted in *Calling the Circle* by Christina Baldwin, p 80)

Everything the Power of the World does is done in a circle.
The sky is round, and I have heard that the
Earth is round like a ball, and so are all the stars.
The wind, in its greatest power, whirls.
Birds make their nests in circles,
For theirs is the same religion as ours.
The sun comes forth and goes down again in a circle.
The moon does the same, and both are round.
Even the seasons form a great circle in their changing,
And always come back again to where they were.
The life of a (person) is a circle from childhood to childhood,
And so it is in everything where power moves.

Professional Asset Building

Participants had an opportunity to explore building the assets of early childhood educators through an experiential activity based on a model developed in Alaska called 'Helping Kids Succeed – Alaskan Style' www.alaskaice.org

An early childhood educator's professional fullness was considered using balloons. Each participant endeavored to keep their balloon away from risks such as low wages, long hours, no respect, and lack of professional development, minimal education and increased expectations. It was discovered that the fuller the balloon, the higher it would go; that it is easier to keep one's balloon afloat if the ground is not constantly shifting underneath; and that it is easier to keep one's balloon afloat with creativity and support.

The group then designed a large 'dream catcher' made up of key people in an early childhood educator's life – strong leaders and supervisors, collaborative colleagues, dynamic learning opportunities, community networks, a professional association. All these and more contributed to building the professional assets of an early childhood educator such as:

- Positive communication
- Motivation
- Power to plan and make decisions
- Honesty
- Creativity

You can discover more about a person in an hour of play than in a year of conversation. – Plato

Opening the Space

The group was left to ponder what was required in the field to strengthen early childhood educators so s/he would feel empowered, motivated, creative, and engaged – so s/he would discover the leader potential within him and herself. Through an inclusive and collaborative model, the group responded to a leading statement, thus formulating up to 60 agenda items for further discussion. See **Appendix A** on page 8.

Ultimately the group broke into twenty-one in-depth discussion groups. The proceedings from those dialogue sessions are transcribed in **Appendix B** on page 10.

Moving Forward

The dialogue sessions were summarized within an *appreciative inquiry model* – building on strengths and the stories of what we know to be true. The group was facilitated to define what it wants more of and to work in that direction, rather than dwelling on deficits. A synopsis is provided under the following four headings, Discovery, Dream, Define, and Destiny.

DISCOVERY

What we are and what we learned

- Issues are the same for us regardless of where we come from
- Belonging and community
- Affirmation
- Strength – clear, know what we want and where we can go
- More depth to our discussions
- We think we are diverse but we're not – we're not as inclusive as we should/could be
- Validation that we are energetic, vital, intelligent people
- Work cross-sectors
- Look at field critically and recognize we need to do things differently
- Back to the future – don't need to reinvent – look at work we have done
- Passion is still there and it is validating that there are others to carry on
- There are real divides – there is more to learn so we can move forward inclusively

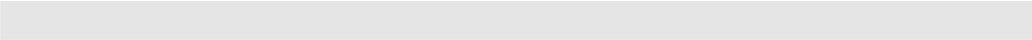
DREAM

About what we could be

- Confident and proud to be ECEs
- Well paid
- Engrained forever in good, appropriate public policy
- College of ECE is established
- ECEBC will find a way to use the money and resources to deepen the analysis and gain new information and inform/feed practice
- Nurturing and angry at the same time
- Move from words to ACTION
- Be recognized and valued
- ECEBC is realistic and the tasks are 'doable' in the face of high expectations
- ECEBC fosters a culture of professionalism and leadership
- Equal partnership at all tables for all
- ECEBC and the sector at large are invited to the 'table' without having to fight to get there
- Find a way to recruit and retain the best and the brightest
- ECEBC has a presence in every community in BC
- ECEBC works in partnership cross sectors to get rid of the division we have discovered

<p style="text-align: center;">DEFINE</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">DESTINY</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">The ideals most talked about</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A consistent message about what an ECE is across the province • Moving from vocational training mode to an educational mode in both pre and post service • Thinking and acting in inclusive ways • Leadership as a concept is not limited to creating a 'leader' but to finding the leadership potential to unfold from within • Personal health in a holistic way is a fundamental building block to professional health • Critical reflection of practice • Power of mentorship • Paint the vision rather than whining • Quality – to promote public trust and be reflective and act on it • Surface, expose and not tolerate the disconnects • We like spider webs better than ladders – non-hierarchical • Need a new government • Hold the past and learn from it • Need an overall provincial communication strategy 	<p style="text-align: center;">Commitments and Actions</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Actions that fall within the guidelines and mandate of ECEBC are identified by – ECEBC.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Define the guiding principles of a professional leadership initiative - ECEBC 2. ECEBC builds a strategic professional leadership plan - ECEBC 3. Develop a communication and marketing strategy regarding the ECE profession - ECEBC 4. Revisit what has been done around professionalism, do a scan currently, build and move forward – ECEBC 5. Ensure that professional development is comprehensive and strategic and not just one offs - ECEBC 6. Support the capacity of the sector to an internal and external dialogue on what is a professional identity and profile of ECEs - ECEBC 7. Define what we mean by the terms profession, professional, professional leadership, professionalization – ECEBC 8. Leverage partners that exist so a professional leadership initiative is not done in isolation – ECEBC 9. Leverage what exists in the post-secondary sector and partner - ECEBC 10. Determine what the money is for and what it is not for and what ECEBC has control over and what it doesn't have control over – ECEBC

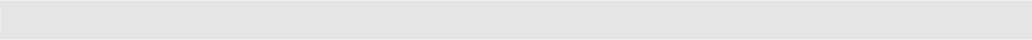
	<p style="text-align: center;">The actions that fall under other jurisdictions are followed by the word – OTHER.</p> <p>11. Advocacy articulates our vision and responds to policies and issues in a proactive action-oriented way – OTHER</p> <p>12. Education for ECE that builds on what was taken before and moves an ECE forward - OTHER</p> <p>13. Sustain, encourage meaningful dialogue on cultural diversity and create partnerships with the Aboriginal community - OTHER</p> <p>14. Research how to meet educational needs of rural communities - OTHER</p> <p>15. Define who we are talking about when we talk about someone who is an ECE - OTHER</p>
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ECEBC has reviewed the actions and commitments identified on July 27, 2007. Actions that fall within the guidelines and mandate of ECEBC are identified by – ECEBC. The actions that fall under other jurisdictions are followed by the word – OTHER.

The word OTHER implies that ECEBC will bring the actions forward to appropriate partners and/or tables, assuming a leadership role in defining next steps in the implementation of a professional leadership initiative for early childhood educators in BC. OTHER also implies that though the actions are important, they have a lesser priority within the current project plan on strategic professional leadership that ECEBC is currently developing.

ECEBC will provide a summary of the strategic planning session along with a project plan and timelines in the fall ECEBC Journal and other relevant publications within the early childhood sector. A communication plan will be contained within the project plan.



Conclusion

The process for the day identified that there is even greater potential if we use the creative energy of a group of people. The planning session was a microcosm of what potentially exists within teams in childcare settings across the province and in a larger capacity within the childcare community as a whole. In order to affect change, planning needs to have a strategic focus. With ECEBC's leadership and the willingness of so many early childhood leaders and activists to come together on July 27th, participants devoted a day to stretching their thinking through creative and interactive techniques. ECEBC has the task of ensuring a strategic plan is developed and there was universal commitment from participants to be a voice back in their home communities.

In order to make this process work there are two things that must be known:

1. Where we are today, and
2. Where we want to be tomorrow.

ECEBC's strategy session paid attention to those 2 main items, which assisted participants in creating the beginning of a professional leadership vision for tomorrow. It is up to all members of the early childhood community to make decisions everyday that will bring that vision to reality.

Be the change that you want to see in the world. – Mohandas Gandhi

Appendix

Appendix A

Creating the Agenda

In response to the following open statement agenda items were proposed.

To ensure professional leadership is embodied within the early childhood education (ECE) field, we need to pay attention to . . .

- Seemingly endless capacity of the sector to make do
- Mentorship in community which leads to leadership
- Explore the developmental stages of ECEs (Lillian Katz)
- Wages and working conditions
- Reflection on everyday practice embedded in everyday practice
- Barriers – geographical, population density, centre size, access to colleagues
- Set solutions and be proactive as opposed to reactive to our field
- Accessible language
- Empowerment for our front line
- Your own leadership skills and women's ways of knowing and defining leadership
- Political and ideological agenda that says child care is a family affair
- Mentoring relationships
- Transferable ECE skills and new additional skills acquired
- Regulation of the profession
- Women's work and roles as defined in our culture
- The success of other sectors – especially other women's sectors such as teaching and nursing
- The goals of ECE – is it all about the children?
- Existing projects and reports that are pertinent to today's issues
- Informing and educating about what is provincial advocacy and where/who/how does it in local communities
- Systemic, concrete, sustained, recognized training and credentials
- How parents perceive ECEs as a resource in the ECE environment
- Early childhood collaborative, respectful process
- Generational transfer of collective leadership
- Alliances and ones not previously considered
- Marketing and articulating the ECE professional pre and post secondary training
- Professional identity
- A diversity of voices
- Affordable and meaningful professional development
- Who is in the ECE sector (i.e. child care, related ECE occupations)
- How leadership is defined in other fields
- How we acknowledge those who demonstrate leadership
- Reconsider our whole role of working with parents and how to develop real partnerships
- Respect and support our colleagues in all streams of ECE
- Model and support risk taking
- Educational levels and adequate time for preparation for work

- A national child care plan
- The value of quality ECE for children and families
- The disconnect between expressed and demonstrated value
- The fragmentation that exists in the field
- The disconnection between words and actions

Appendix B

Twenty-One Transcribed Dialogue Sessions

TOPIC/ISSUE:

Respect and support our colleagues in all streams of ECE

SOULTIONS:

- A. Two examples of what we are doing right on this issue.
- Invited WCFCCA to attend this day.
 - Efforts are being made to collaborate across the sectors. We encourage this to continue.
- B. Two examples of how we could still improve on this issue
- Recognize that quality comes in all shapes, sizes and environments
 - Home-based, centre-based, not for profit, and profit centres be treated equally = equally accountable centres
 - ***Work more collaboratively in presenting training***

TOPIC/ISSUE:

Systemic, concrete, recognized training and credential

SOULTIONS:

- C. Two examples of what we are doing right on this issue.
- The Training Strategy Project (TSP) of the Child Care Human Resource Sector Council provides us with contemporary, pan-Canadian research and recommendations
 - Gathering all the examples (small or one off as they may be) where we are making progress – e.g. CAP College moving to a Degree – centres that have initiated self-study and best practice linkages with colleagues
- D. Two examples of how we could still improve on this issue.
- Move our field from a vocational to an educational classification
 - Plan Professional Development during work hours with staff/sub coverage rather than making do with evening and weekend activities
 - Model after Toronto programs where there are clusters, pedagogues, networks, etc. for support and use the money to offer on site support
 - Spread the word that ***'leadership is the gateway to quality in programs'***

TOPIC/ISSUE:

Alliances and those not previously considered

SOULTIONS:

- E. Two examples of what we are doing right on this issue.
- Everyone has the same information
 - When cuts announced – strength of alliances really showed across the board – voices were raised
- F. Two examples of how we could still improve on this issue.
- Need for independent voice and leadership
 - ***Making it real on the ground for child care staff*** – how they're working and what they are doing
 - Strengthening local chapters
 - Communication – make comparison to building the public education system

TOPIC/ISSUE:

Regulating the profession – College of ECEs – criteria for entrance to field, guide standards regarding training, professional ethics, discipline, define an early childhood educator; use the title ECE (name protection), public recognition

SOULTIONS:

- G. Two examples of what we are doing right on this issue.
- Already have defined what we want and submitted a proposal with 2 strong options for models
 - The proposal has been accepted by other professions within the Health Professions Council – the only problem was the 'fit' of ECEs with health practitioners
- H. Two examples of how we could still improve on this issue.
- Review what was done (look to other countries and provinces), update and make recommendations for options (e.g. go back to Health Professions or look at the Education, Social Services Union)
 - Work on the negative environment of the government vis a vis 'political will'
 - Get actual numbers of ECEs in B.C.
 - ***The real barrier – present government is de-regulating rather than regulating so political will is an issue***

TOPIC/ISSUE:

Marketing/articulating the ECE profession pre and post secondary

SOULTIONS:

- I. Two examples of what we are doing right on this issue.
- Nothing provided in this area
- J. Two examples of how we could still improve on this issue.
- Model the example of life long learning

- Continue to articulate that the ECE field needs those who are strong emotionally and physically and able to take time to self-reflect
- Market to show what is happening in centres – i.e. real learning

TOPIC/ISSUE:

Provincial advocacy – connect with community

SOULTIONS:

- K. Two examples of what we are doing right on this issue.
- 28 communities expressed selves to government
 - Level of mobilization in the province took leadership roles
 - Coming of age
 - Kamloops: speak on city hall – helped to organize for other events involved in the community
 - ***Advocacy is part of professional development*** – need to articulate practice, network
- L. Two examples of how we could still improve on this issue.
- Regional experiences move to provincial sharing – a generational movement
 - Let's get angry
 - Take professional identity to community – social marketing needed
 - Local advocacy to describe job/profession long term, sustained way to develop these skills for field (skills = advocacy, articulation, education)
 - Deconstruct advocacy issues – finding a public voice

TOPIC/ISSUE:

Empowerment of the front line workers

SOULTIONS:

- M. Two examples of what we are doing right on this issue.
- Providing supports and networking via membership with ECEBC and newsletter
 - Providing annual conference/training/networking and specific Aboriginal resources to support ECEs in providing quality culturally appropriate care
 - Advocacy at provincial and national levels
- N. Two examples of how we could still improve on this issue.
- ***Embrace all sectors and frontline ECE programs and services equally***
 - Stronger partnerships and collaboration
 - Recognize and respect and support unique challenges of all child care sectors (including Aboriginal)
 - Develop mentorship and leadership resources for future leaders
 - Recruit and develop leaders
 - Invest in education and quality care
 - Empower frontline workers in dialogue and advocacy
 - Raise the profile of profession
 - Need to shift in how society values children and family
 - Good public policy that values young children

TOPIC/ISSUE:

Disconnect between words and actions – the disconnect between reality and public policy

SOULTIONS:

- O. Two examples of what we are doing right on this issue.
- Information from the Coalition and Advocacy forum, ECEBC is clarifying
 - ***We're tenacious – we're keeping up the fight – we're still here***
- P. Two examples of how we could still improve on this issue.
- More public education regarding supporting families (i.e. working parents versus stay at home parents)
 - ECEBC's message could be quality experience whether the parent is working or not working – the missing piece is supporting families who use child care
 - Imagine a community that . . .
 - Speak proudly about what we do – marketing or communication strategy (every letter you sign has your letters after it)
 - ***We need to market ourselves, be confident, have pride in what we do***

TOPIC/ISSUE:

Critical reflection in everyday practice

SOULTIONS:

- Q. Two examples of what we are doing right on this issue.
- Realize it's important – general awareness
 - We need to realize we should engage
 - Need to develop critical thinking skills – curiosity
 - Difficult to engage in critical reflection – it's a struggle . . . it can be devastating
 - Willingness to critique self – need to collaborate in reflection
 - Challenging – need mentors for educators and mentors need support – invitation to become engaged is respectful
 - Reflection leads to common values – reflection on image of the child
- R. Two examples of how we could still improve on this issue.
- Practitioners need time and energy to reflect – the disposition to listen and collaborate
 - Open to challenging each other – dialogue that values uncertainty and uncomfortable-ness
 - Taken for granted terms of 'leadership' and 'professionalism' – what assumptions are embedded?
 - ***A good leader creates a climate for reflection***
 - Professionals as reflection on practice – mindful awareness of your interaction and the ability to articulate that

- Different small groups discussing ideas – reflection happening – connect with each other to elevate the discussions
- Reggio Network – 3years – choose a book and discuss it together over a potluck – value fellowship and collegiality
- Could there be book group discussions through ECEBC branches – a dialogue with the book focusing the discussion
- ***Reflection of everyday practice is part of professionalism***
- Create opportunities for reflection for profession – time/space for deep discussion to unpack ideas
- People in the field are often entrenched – need to pose questions in such a way as to not stop thinking – how to involve folks without defensiveness
- Create a climate of challenge
- Write about internal conflict – a platform to express the conflict – is there a ‘truth’ about children?
- Think about the child – not a rule
- A good discussion point would be – how to hold child development/psychology in the field? How does it carry us? Does it colonize our minds?
- Can't do critical reflection about practice without being involved in practice
- Build the capacity for reflection within the field
- Prescribed curriculum is given to us – i.e. HOP – do we allow this?

TOPIC/ISSUE:

Professional identity

SOULTIONS:

- S. Two examples of what we are doing right on this issue.
- Listening to each other in a broad sense to all parts of the sector (a beginning of collaboration)
 - Recognition by a larger group
 - We have a professional association, education and a special body of knowledge
- T. Two examples of how we could still improve on this issue.
- ***Identifying ourselves as professionals in a public marketing campaign***
 - Develop consistent messages that we can agree on and use in our communities
 - Marketing to the field
 - Look at the history of teachers
 - Create a network of ECEs
 - Partner with business to sponsor ads and working with community newspapers
 - Cards that identify qualities of ECE professionalism

TOPIC/ISSUE:

Our own history and learn from it to shape the future

SOULTIONS:

- U. Two examples of what we are doing right on this issue.
- A lot has been done – efficient to bring it forward
 - We have the data

- We have the professional association, the milestones and the socio-political milestones
- We have a library of resources developed at ECEBC
- ***Make it a resolution of the board to preserve history as a top priority***

V. Two examples of how we could still improve on this issue.

- Develop and formalize a group of elders/council who are not on the board but are committed to work in the interest of the board and to bring a voice to the history
- Students have limited exposure to history of the field in BC – ***make history useful, alive and relevant*** – need a package pulled together for training programs, other jurisdictions, CCRRs, etc. (DVDV, PPT, written booklet)
- The history of the professional organization is critical to the longevity of the association and use this as a marketing tool to grow ECEBC branches with an opportunity to build on local history – this is a generational transfer of collective leadership
- Need the knowledge of ECE
- Use 5 stages of guiding principle and embed history as a level of deeper education

TOPIC/ISSUE:

Cultural diversity

SOULTIONS:

W. Two examples of what we are doing right on this issue.

- We need to critique our own understanding of cultural diversity
- We haven't accepted diversity, even though we talk about it
- We need to bring discussions around 'whiteness' within our ECE field – what do we assume? – How is our field embedded in 'white' values?

X. Two examples of how we could still improve on this issue.

- ECEBC needs to engage First Nations and immigrant communities at the table
- Acknowledge there are Aboriginal ECE communities that have voices
- Invite them to the table
- ECEBC need to support the kind of skills needed to work in Aboriginal child care
- ***Need to integrate Aboriginal knowledge into any training/professional development***
- Positive example is BC Aboriginal Child Care Society's 'Aboriginal Early Learning Language Immersion Certificate'

TOPIC/ISSUE:

Political/ideological agenda that says that childcare is a family's failure

SOULTIONS:

Y. Two examples of what we are doing right on this issue.

- Recent cuts to child care saw support expand to non-traditional advocates (e.g. mayors, council, Chamber of Commerce)
- ***'Functional' families that use child care are becoming visible***

- Z. Two examples of how we could still improve on this issue.
- Capitalize on the current 'wave' regarding labour shortage – the link to the economy
 - Addressing the fragmentation – united voice
 - Mutual support/respect between parents for choices (stay at home and working parents)

TOPIC/ISSUE:

Projects, initiatives and report that are pertinent

SOULTIONS:

- AA. Two examples of what we are doing right on this issue.
- There is a lot of research and we are building a strong Canadian research base – so we don't need to reinvent the wheel
 - E.g. through the Child Care Human Resource Sector Council – What's in a mane, Occupational standards, National Training Guidelines, BC Occupational Competencies Assessment Tool
 - Therefore, ***we have so much to start with already***
- BB. Two examples of how we could still improve on this issue.
- Keeping history and research alive and flowing
 - Making connections stronger and more visible in research, policy and practice
 - ***Use research finding to validate and affirm what we know anecdotally and make it meaningful for the field***
 - ECEs need a self-regulating body (e.g. a College)
 - A common framework that articulates our work
 - Opportunities to stay current in knowledge and skills
 - Challenge the field to articulate their professionalism
 - A promotions program province wide for TV
 - Infiltrating into other sectors to share our messages

TOPIC/ISSUE:

Women's work, culture, leadership style and relationship to ECE

SOULTIONS:

- CC. Two examples of what we are doing right on this issue.
- That we have, do and will hold onto the woman's culture and way of knowing of this sector
 - ***Woman's culture and way of knowing is the source of our strength as well as a source of our problem***
- DD. Two examples of how we could still improve on this issue.
- This way of knowing isn't articulated well and isn't understood – there is too much emphasis on self-esteem and it isn't translating into quality
 - It's so wrong that nurturing isn't valued
 - By treating 'it' a an intuitive given there is an assumption that anyone can do it
 - We need to pull together and challenge each other to think at a professional level

- Long term professional development – New Zealand has good research questions
- Teach and encourage reflective practice which empowers people to stand taller

TOPIC/ISSUE:

Wages and working conditions

SOULTIONS:

- EE. Two examples of what we are doing right on this issue.
- Working conditions – good leadership/manager
 - Stated to speak out and be visible in the province – we have started the initiative around the wages and working conditions
 - We have a momentum going at present and need to build on this
- FF. Two examples of how we could still improve on this issue.
- We need a powerful voice in our government – treasury board level or policy level
 - Educate government, customers, business (which is a huge body of our population)
 - Look beyond the usual connections and partners (e.g. insurance agencies)
 - Stop whining and take proactive action – articulate the word ‘no’ – ***value what you do – it's not free!***
 - Radio ads sponsored by businesses, message to parents in newsletters
 - Social marketing plan/education
 - Toolkit – how will people get it – online, person in the community, face to face (best way), travel through the province
 - Can we have alliances with other people – Health Authorities?
 - Look for opportunities to get the message out

TOPIC/ISSUE:

Regulating the field

SOULTIONS:

- GG. Two examples of what we are doing right on this issue.
- There is some regulation
 - Existing Code of Ethics
- HH. Two examples of how we could still improve on this issue.
- Raise standards of licensing and regulatory body
 - Fine the sector
 - Market credentialed ECE
 - Encourage signatures followed by ECE
 - Education and Advocacy around the value
 - How do we work with generational divide and provide quality – professional development around understanding developmental levels of different generations
 - Require regulatory body to value and acknowledge a difference between leadership and practitioner – ***the value for ECE is a social marketing plan***

TOPIC/ISSUE:

The success of other sectors

SOULTIONS:

- II. Two examples of what we are doing right on this issue.
- Recognizing similarities between nursing and teaching sectors and the pathway they've taken to success
 - The education and training that we have been committed to maintaining or building (based on evidence)
- JJ. Two examples of how we could still improve on this issue.
- Marketing strategy and community and business relationship strategy that promotes the professionalism and value of the field
 - ***Establish a core set of competencies pulling the whole field together in agreement***
 - Needs to be cohesive so that the public can see it in a cohesive way
 - Major recruitment campaign
 - Liaison to government, business, and community
 - ECEs need maturity, mentors, validation, national/provincial/community support, communication tools, using ECE after their name

TOPIC/ISSUE:

Defining leadership

SOULTIONS:

- KK. Two examples of what we are doing right on this issue.
- Living the process of leadership
 - Specific demands to be leaders in response to politics – want to know what to do about taking risks and growing into a position of personal risks – need to trust the process
 - Isolation of leadership – able to grow into it the first time and have strong connections with others – good staff helps
 - How to build leaders – define leaders and leadership – shared leadership with a structure to encourage leaders - mentoring
- LL. Two examples of how we could still improve on this issue.
- Identify mentoring as an important goal – but mentors need support
 - New leaders from the field from different places and situations – recognizing the potential in self and others
 - Leadership comes in little ways – ***takes courage to be a leader*** – critical self-reflection necessary to engage in questioning practice and ideas – what pillars are needed?
 - Need to look at self – stress can push one to the edge and push one to critical reflection
 - Learn to fall and get up – fear and discomfort is involved
 - ***A mentoring framework is needed*** to help people take the step to be mentors – to listen to educators about what they need

TOPIC/ISSUE:

What is Quality?

SOULTIONS:

- MM. Two examples of what we are doing right on this issue.
- We do have a body of research and statements about what quality is
 - We do have some best practice examples of supports and initiatives that support quality and we could expand these
- NN. Two examples of how we could still improve on this issue.
- Work on overcoming resistance to change
 - Embedding an understanding of quality into our consciousness and our culture
 - Develop sustained professional development – no just quick one off events
 - More mentoring and more collaboration with more real teamwork
 - Unionization and professionalism
 - Maintain an active pursuit of professional development
 - Create (with money) a culture of professional development
 - Promote self-responsibility for ongoing professional development
 - More traveling road shows to revitalize and promote self-reflection and evaluation
 - Quality = people, practices and programs
 - ***12 hours of professional development in 5 years – GIVE US A BREAK!***
 - ECEBC and licensing should collaborate on professional development projects

TOPIC/ISSUE:

Education levels – adequate preparation for the field

SOULTIONS:

- OO. Two examples of what we are doing right on this issue.
- Currently available all over the province – public training programs (preference)
 - There are post-basic options available
 - Training and education is reflective of advances, growth and best practice in the field
- PP. Two examples of how we could still improve on this issue.
- More stringent monitoring of private training
 - Ensure entrance and admission requirement
 - Advocate for more post-basic training
 - Advocate for funding for student loans and funding for part time studies especially for post-basic (wages and working conditions)
 - ***2 year minimum in ECE***
 - Laddering into degrees – credential workshops
 - Pay attention to cultural diversity – closer attention to multicultural issues in training
 - Need to include in depth planning and consultation about education levels while regulating the profession

