Investing In Quality ◎
Early Learning and Child Care Peterborough

Protocol for Planning Professional Learning   **September 28, 2016**

> Continuous professional learning is the systematic and intentional maintenance, enhancement and expansion of the knowledge, skills and ethical values and behaviours necessary to ensure ongoing quality professional practice throughout a member's career.
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> *(Continuous Professional Learning Program Portfolio Handbook, College of Early Childhood Educators, 2015)*

Research shows that the most effective way to influence quality in early learning is through ongoing professional learning, for example, Friendly & Beach, 2015. Recognizing this, one of the four strategic priorities of the Investing in Quality Peterborough initiative (IIQ) is to champion and support professional learning that influences practice.

Professional learning in the community is planned with intention and follows current research and best practice in learning. IIQ staff are aware of influences such as Ministry of Education directives, College of ECE requirements, and trends in the sector. At least every other year the early learning and care community is surveyed around their professional learning needs and interests. Raising the Bar submissions, peer dialogue days, mentor visits, feedback from professional learning opportunities, and ongoing dialogue with educators provide opportunities to gather evidence of the influence of professional learning and insight for future planning. These stories are reflected in the annual report.

IIQ staff offer and support diverse approaches to professional learning, ranging from self-directed learning, job embedded inquiry, and program tours, to a large annual conference. A reflective model including Communities of Practice (CoP) is used wherever possible in IIQ led professional learning and its adoption is encouraged across the sector. On the IIQ website and in the resource library, educators can access webinars, DVDs, articles and books. IIQ staff develop a certificate of participation for each event and seek participant feedback through written reflections.

In **planning and delivering** professional learning opportunities a number of factors are considered. These include:
- Annual work plan and budget
- Goals and interests of the community
- Other professional learning opportunities taking place in the area
- Availability of supply staff
- Weather and seasonal preferences
- Seeking perspectives from outside the community
- acknowledge and use the capacity in our community

Promoting professional learning opportunities

Promoting and informing the community of professional learning opportunities is a critical part of the process. All local events and opportunities are posted on the IIQ website. Annually 2-3 professional learning calendars, 3-4 newsletters, and event information are emailed to programs and educators. Events are also promoted through social media including Facebook and Twitter.

EventBrite is used by IIQ staff as a platform to register for opportunities where no cost is involved. Information about professional learning opportunities offered outside the community is forwarded through email and/or posted on the IIQ website.

Professional learning opportunities in the community:

- Four networks meet regularly throughout the year. These are Early Learning, School-age, Cooks and Supervisors networks.
- At least two professional learning series will be offered annually using the CoP approach.
- A fall event to take place on a Saturday
- The Early Learning and Care conference is held annually in April and guided by the Conference committee.
- The Cooks' Conference in late spring

In addition to opportunities planned and delivered by IIQ staff, the initiative also supports professional learning offered by community partners, such as Five Counties Children's Centre, Kinark Child and Family Services, and the Peterborough Public Health.

References

https://www.college-ece.ca/en/Documents/CPL%20Portfolio%20Handbook%202015.pdf (Retrieved June 22 2016)

http://www.childcarecanada.org/publications/quality-design/05/03/elements-high-quality-early-learning-and-child-care-system (Retrieved June 22 2016)