

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE

Organizational Change and Stakeholder Engagement in the California Career
Pathways Trust Fund at a California Community College

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By

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I look back at my educational career and at times I am overwhelmed by the opportunities that I have had access to. Growing up in a small town in southern Guatemala, picking coffee beans, and raising livestock, I could not fathom that at one point in my life I would be typing these words and finishing a dissertation to become a Doctor of Education. None of this could have been possible if it weren't for my ancestors experiencing their lives and somehow pushing our family forward amidst the great injustices of the past.

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Dedication

Dime con quién andas y te diré quién eres.

Tell me who your friends are, and I'll tell you who you are.

–Ismelda Barrera

Table of Contents

Signature Page	ii
Acknowledgements.....	iii
Dedication.....	iv
List of Tables	vii
List of Figures.....	viii
Abstract.....	ix
Chapter 1: Statement of The Problem.....	1
Organizational Change.....	6
Career Pathways.....	7
Funding Specifics.....	8
Student Involvement	10
Problem Statement.....	11
Purpose and Significance.....	12
Research Questions.....	13
Theoretical Framework.....	14
Overview of the Methodology	20
Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations.....	22
Definitions of Terms	24
Organization of the Dissertation	25
Chapter 2: Literature Review.....	27
History of Education.....	27
Nationally.....	27
California	28
Advent of Career Pathways	31
Internationally.....	31
United States	31
California	32
Organizational Change.....	35
Engagement.....	36
Stakeholders.....	39
Students.....	40
Faculty.....	41
Administrators.....	41
Employers	42
Legislators.....	43
Conclusions.....	44
Chapter 3: Methods.....	48
Sites.....	50
Sample.....	53
Administrators.....	55
Faculty.....	56

Students.....	58
Instrumentation	59
Document Review.....	59
Interviews.....	60
Procedure	63
Analysis of Data.....	67
Ethical Considerations	69
Validity	70
Summary	71
Chapter 4: Research Findings	72
Student Engagement	75
Administrator Engagement	79
Faculty Engagement.....	79
Paradigm Shift	80
Kotter’s Eight Stages of Organizational Change	82
Stage One: Establishing a Sense of Urgency	83
Stage Two: Creating a Guiding Coalition.....	84
Stage Three: Developing a Vision and Strategy	86
Stage Four: Communicating the Change Vision	88
Stage Five: Empowering Employees for Broad-Based Action.....	89
Stage Six: Generating Short-Term Wins	90
Stage Seven: Consolidating Gains and Producing More Change.....	91
Stage Eight: Anchoring New Approaches in the Culture	92
Staff Capacity.....	93
Organizational Leadership	96
Stability	97
Conclusion	99
Chapter 5: Conclusions and Discussion.....	101
Organizational Change at OCC	103
Stakeholder Engagement in Organizational Change	104
Organizational Change.....	105
Actor Networks and Self Determination Theory	109
Discussion	111
Recommendations.....	113
References.....	117
Appendix A: Permission to Conduct the Study at the College.....	126
Appendix B: Electronic Mail Invitation to Participate	128
Appendix C: Electronic Mail Confirmation	129
Appendix D: Interview Protocol.....	130
Administrators.....	131
Faculty.....	133
Employers	135
Students.....	137

List of Tables

Table 1. Consortia Collaborations	51
Table 2. Demographic Analysis Information.....	66
Table 3. Code Formulation	68

List of Figures

Figure 1. California Career Pathways Organizational Change Efforts..... 73

Abstract

Organizational Change and Stakeholder Engagement in the California Career Pathways Trust Fund at a California Community College

By

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Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership

The economies of the US and California have experienced a significant shift from dominant industrial-based production to more technology-inspired forms of production and manufacturing. Workers need different technical skills and competencies than they needed in previous decades. The gap in skills has created challenges for employers. California state legislators approved investments of over \$500 million to decrease the skills gap by funding the California Career Pathways Trust Fund, which awards grants to establish or strengthen career pathway programs in high schools that connect with community colleges. The present qualitative case study was implemented to explore the perspectives, attitudes, and lived experiences of 12 participants: three students, three faculty, three administrators, and three local employers connected to Oceanside Community College (pseudonym) regarding (a) their role in

the organizational change process, (b) how the sample groups were engaged in decision-making, (c) the engagement of institutional leadership, and (d) the outcome of the career pathways implementation as an organizational change process. Results showed that organizational change is not easily explained through an eight-stage process, although several stages were present, and others were not. Organizational change is much more complex at a community college, and implementation was directly related to practice and procedure. Additionally, the community college system was undergoing several organizational change efforts simultaneously, which as a totality amount to an organizational change process but taken separately created complexity in observing the direct link between stakeholder engagement and grant outcomes.

The primary finding showed that stakeholder engagement in the design and implementation stage involved only faculty and administrators. Although this represented half of the identified stakeholders the organizational change effort was successful, while simultaneously lacking several stages in Kotter's eight-stage organizational change framework. This finding suggests that other organizational change efforts may have helped to advance the grant outcomes and their ultimate success at Oceanside Community College. The primary recommendation is to conduct a large-scale study that looks at all organizational change efforts that took place in California starting with the California State Plan for Career Technical Education of 2008 and track its impact from policy to practice to better understand organizational change.

Chapter 1: Statement of The Problem

Over the past three decades, the economies of the United States and California have experienced tremendous shifts from a predominantly industrial-based production economy to more technology-inspired forms of production and manufacturing (Carnevale & Rose, 2015). This shift away from industrial forms of production has resulted in shifts in the required skills and competencies of workers who continue to work within older sectors of the economy. Employers and workers today, need different and newer skills and competencies to stay competitive. The disconnect between the lack of skilled workers and the skills demands of the private sectors has created a skills gap for both workers and employers. This gap between the skills that workers currently possess and the advanced skills needed by employers has slowed the ability of employers to hire qualified candidates in some high-growth private sectors, and concomitantly has increased the urgency for governmental actors and agencies, through greater investment in educational initiatives, to assist in addressing this challenge (Bohn, 2014).

California state legislators have approved investments of over \$500 million to decrease the skills gap found by public policy organizations in the state. California's unprecedented and recent educational investments in programs that connect academics, career-focused curricula, and job experience have paved the way for California educational leaders to begin exploring how to reshape education to meet both the demands of California residents for a liberal educational experience with career-focused experiences and curricula (Leal, 2016). These investments in career pathways education have reached over \$4 billion since 2014 confirming the public's need to discuss the skills gap that industry leaders have experienced in the past three decades (California Department of Finance, 2017).

Five-hundred million dollars of the California career pathways educational investments includes funding for the California Career Pathways Trust Fund: Round 1 (\$250 million), and Round 2 (\$250 million). The California Career Pathways Trust Fund “represents the largest workforce development-through-education program in the nation” (CDE, 2017a). The California Career Pathways Trust Fund Round 1 fund offered "to convene, connect, measure, or broker efforts to establish or enhance a locally defined career pathways program that connects school districts, county superintendents of schools, charter schools, and community colleges with business entities” (Assembly Bill 86, 2013, sec. 86(a)(1)). The \$500 million in grants enabled educational institutions to engage a variety of stakeholders in the design, development, and implementation of career pathways models. High schools and community colleges implementing similar pathways have raised questions concerning the merits of such programs, their implementation, and their long-term outcomes (Bailey, Jaggars, & Jenkins, 2015).

A review of the literature revealed limited empirical studies about results of these grants, including any research at Oceanside Community College (OCC). The present qualitative case study was implemented to explore the perspectives, attitudes, and lived experiences of students, faculty, administrators, and local employers about (a) their role in the organizational change process relative to the design and development of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant, (b) how deeply and effectively they were engaged in decision-making relative to implementation of the grant, (c) the level of engagement and participation of institutional leadership in the design and development of the career path program, and (d) the outcome of the career path programmatic changes in terms of their agreed upon objectives.

Education in California has faced several challenges in the last four decades trying to keep pace with changing demographics and advancement of technology in the economy. Poor retention and poor graduation rates, coupled with dwindling funding streams, have left the public K-12 and higher education systems with additional challenges (Rose, 2013). Symonds, Schwartz, and Ferguson (2011) conclude, “In an era in which education has never been so important to economic success, the United States has fallen behind many other first-world nations in educational attainment” (p. 1). This realization coupled with the changing U.S. economy has emboldened external forces that are driving greater investment in California’s educational systems.

Past educational reform efforts in the United States have focused on two options: an academic college-preparatory option, or a Career Technical Education (CTE) option (Oakes & Saunders, 2008). Oakes and Saunders note, “[that the] solution was to do both, by creating separate academic, general, and vocational curriculum tracks and sorting students into the track that best matched their talents and likely futures” (p. 5). The separation into tracks can be traced back to the passage of the federal Smith-Hughes Act of 1917, with the “unfortunate requirement of separating ‘vocational’ and ‘academic’ studies” (Stipanovic, Lewis, & Stringfield, 2012, p. 81). Since 1917, the evolution of this separation has created innovations in programs of study, such as youth apprenticeships, career pathways, and small learning academies. Additionally, “Historians have also pointed to its unintended effects in differentiating the secondary-education curriculum in ways that often-reinforced existing class- and race-based inequalities” (Steffes, 2014, p. 1). Oakes and Saunders (2008) later observed that placement into vocational tracks were affected by a student’s race, ethnicity and socio-economic status (p. 125). The challenges of tracking marginalized students into these programs may be attributed to the separation of

vocational education from the traditional educational system as a discipline but also financially. As a discipline, vocational education, also known as Career Technical Education, is treated differently from other “academic” education programs starting at high schools and through to the University of California system. In 2000, the University of California system created the A–G requirements, which are used to approve courses from all private and public high schools in California and views those students who have completed them successfully as prepared for university-level coursework. As of 2007, 80 percent of private and public Career Technical Education courses were not approved by the UC system. The California State University system also requires and uses the UC A-G system for admissions into their universities. Financially, “the separation between academic education and Career Technical Education is written into existing law,” and the California Educational Code funds these programs from different sources, maintains different credentialing and houses these programs in different facilities (Oakes & Saunders, 2008, p. 50).

Career Technical Education programs, as a supplier to the demands of local industries, tended to be located near industrial and urban school districts (Oakes & Saunders, 2008). This resulted in Career Technical Education programs recruiting more students from urban school districts, which led to several community-based organizations advocating for school districts to provide A-G courses for all students (Murillo & Trinchero, 2019). This resulted in school districts adopting “A–G For All” policies that continue to discount Career Technical Education programs as viable options for student. However, as the skills gap has increased in California legislators and interest groups are attempting to combine this system into a multiple pathways approach that combines academic and career readiness simultaneously (Oakes & Saunders, 2008).

Jenkins (2006) defined career pathways as "a process of adapting existing [educational] programs and services, and adding new ones, to enable students to advance to successively higher levels of education and employment in target sectors" (p. 6). Career pathway models, and similar models such as apprenticeships, middle colleges, and internships, which combine academic and career curricular paths, have evolved differently and with varying outcomes in cities and states throughout the U.S. (Bailey et al., 2015; Jenkins, 2006; Martinez & McGrath, 2014; McGaughy & Venezia, 2015; Oakes & Saunders, 2008); thus, presently there is no single recommended model presently. Separately, McClenney and Dare (2013) indicate that the development of these pathways "involves appropriate engagement of faculty, staff, administrators, students, and governing boards in planning and design, including collaborative examination of available evidence of effective practice" (p. 26). Additionally, educational institutions encompass varying cultures, economies, interests, geographies, and practices, making career pathways difficult to standardize. Nonetheless, career pathways, and similar career-focused models have shown some positive outcomes for students, educational systems, and employer demand (Castellano, Sundell, Overman, & Aliaga, 2012; Oakes & Saunders, 2008; Stipanovic et al., 2012).

As a result of this focus on the skills gap and career pathways, the educational programs in California are currently under intense scrutiny by legislators and employers. California's Higher Education system is not keeping up with the economy's changing needs (Johnson, Bohn, & Cuellar Mejia, 2017). Legislators and educational leaders are currently focusing their attention on how to prepare students to advance them into postsecondary education or employment after high school. This focus has brought career pathway models to the forefront as a possible strategy to connect high school students to community colleges through course

sequencing with a specific focus on high-growth local careers. These models are not new, but their development has been inconsistent and lacking interconnectivity within schools and between systems (Stipanovic et al., 2012). This inconsistency is reflected by the variety of names used to describe programs that combine a career component in an academic setting with such programs as tech prep, apprenticeships, dual/concurrent enrollment, middle/early colleges, pathways, career tech, and others (Stipanovic et al., 2012).

Some educational researchers have attempted to define these practices and programs when discussing their evolution through career pathway frameworks, but their efforts have so far lacked a universal standard. Jenkins (2006) created a definition of career pathways, but that, too, has not been universally accepted by educational institutions utilizing career pathway programs. Career pathway models incorporate many standard structures such as (a) exposure to college courses by high school students through dual enrollment classes, (b) early career exploration activities such as guest speakers from a variety of business sectors, (c) employer visits, (d) career shadowing, and (e) internship opportunities, as described by Jenkins. Absent a clear definition, these different career pathway programs and activities are creating greater collaboration between high schools, community colleges, and local employers.

Organizational Change

As high schools, community colleges, and employers continue to work together to implement collaborative career pathway programs, it is important to understand who is managing the relationships among stakeholders, which individuals are involved in design, development, and implementation, and what roles they play in the advancement of career pathway programs. The literature on organizational change reveals much about the purpose of individual participation in organizational change and how certain practices can be borrowed or incorporated

from similar organizational change initiatives (Alfred & Carter, 1994; Bolman & Deal, 2008; Kotter, 1996; Pasmore & Fagans, 1992); thus, the results of the design, development, and implementation of a career pathway program could provide valuable insights to educational practitioners on how to apply an organizational change framework to manage a change process.

One of the foundational values of organizational change is in “the empowerment of participants at all levels of organizations to take part in making decisions that affect them” (Pasmore & Fagars, 1992, p. 378). Of value to the larger educational community would be a clear description of how a focus on career pathways could engage multiple stakeholders in the development of such a program, which is another intent of this study. A search of the literature reveals an incomplete and unbalanced body of knowledge about what role stakeholders play in organizational change associated with career pathway programs at community colleges.

Career Pathways

California’s educational leaders are currently exploring how to reshape education to meet the demands of California residents and the state’s businesses. These educational experiences support students with career-focused experiences and curricula connected to available jobs after graduation (Leal, 2016). Investments in career pathways, such as the California Career Pathways Trust Fund, have created financial incentives for high schools and community colleges to undergo substantive organizational change to design and implement educational programming linking high schools and community colleges. Such programs aim to increase college enrollment and improve the employability of graduates (Leal, 2016).

Career pathways at institutions that have received funding from the California Career Pathways Trust Fund completed the final stage of their 5-year program development in 2018. However, there is limited research on the outcomes of earlier career pathway efforts and similar

models. As a result, attention is now focused on way to validate the career pathway approach. Legislators as well as educators and the public are waiting to see if career pathways are effective in engaging and graduating highly employable students. Another focus of the present research study was the integration and collaboration between high school districts and community colleges districts, per the language of the Career Pathways Trust Fund legislation (Assembly Bill 86, 2013). This collaboration between high schools and community colleges is the focus of many stakeholder groups throughout the state and especially each geographical community that received any of the \$500 million grant funding.

Stakeholder engagement research speaks to the role that public and private sector stakeholders (Gittleman, 1994) and faculty, staff and administrators (Kadlec & Rowlett, 2014) should play in the development and implementation of new programs in higher education, but empirical evidence in support of these theories is lacking. Of interest to this study was the clear lack of research about the role students should play in the development and delivery design of career pathways programs at community colleges.

Funding Specifics

California awarded its Career Pathways Trust Fund grants through two separate funding appropriations, both of which were vetted and approved for implementation by state legislative and administrative agencies. The California Career Pathways Trust Fund investments were made from years 2014 through 2018 for the first round of funding, and from years 2015 through 2019 for the second round of funding (California Department of Education, 2016). The present study was an effort to provide a focus on participants who were engaged in the organizational change process between 2014 and 2018 at OCC. Institutions seeking funding had to provide local labor market data that would support a career pathways program through providing direct

links to academic career ladders and jobs. The career pathways strategy had to synchronize participant activity from high school to community college and beyond, had to include student work-based learning experience opportunities and technical curricula that would lead to higher employability of students into the identified career pathways, and also provided opportunities for future educational degrees and certificates. Employability was defined as being the “skills, understanding and personal attributes—that make graduates more likely to gain employment” (Yorke, 2006, p. 8).

Career pathway models and similar models that connect real-life experiences with academics have been researched and discussed in detail, but often lack the connection between which stakeholders were engaged in the process of organizational change and for what purposes (Bailey et al., 2015; Harbour & Wolgemuth, 2015; Martinez & McGrath, 2014; McGaughy & Venezia, 2015; Rodicio, Mayer, & Jenkins, 2014). As John Dewey (1916), in his seminal work *Democracy and Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education* argued, “Education, in its broadest sense, is the means of . . . social continuity of life” (p. 4).

Educational reform changes which can make significant alterations to the social continuity of a student’s educational experience could benefit from more input by a cross-sector of stakeholders that directly benefit from these reform efforts, particularly students as the direct beneficiaries of reform changes (Kennedy & Datnow, 2011). The California Career Pathways Trust Fund created this opportunity for a cross-sector of partners and thus is a particularly salient subject for this qualitative case study.

Oceanside Community College (OCC) has had a history of engaging their local stakeholders such as business members through advisory councils to ensure curricula is consistent with industry competencies. Additionally, OCC as a large urban college with over

24,000 students enrolled each year has several distinctions and awards for its collaborative approach to community engagement and its ability to work with local high school district and local state university to build innovative programming that connects all systems for the advancement of collective educational outcomes. As a leader in this field, locally and nationally, OCC has proven to be a champion in the space of collaboration and integration and is a prime candidate to explore how it used its California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant to further their stakeholder engagement.

Student Involvement

Students in U.S. community colleges are much more diverse today in many demographic indicators, such as age, time taken off from school, and parenting responsibilities, than in the past (Rose, 2013). The largest growing population among community college students is the nontraditional student, typically with an average age of 29, who has participated in the workforce, and often many of whom did not pursue formal education after high school (American Association of Community Colleges, 2017). These nontraditional students offer a rich background of professional and personal experiences and provide community college classes with fresh and diverse perspectives. It is unknown, however, what role community college students should have in the development and implementation of organizational change efforts such as the career pathways programs that integrate high school and community college curricula. Thus, research into this area is important to the field of education, particularly community colleges.

To date, research in the United States has used students in a limited fashion such as test subjects and program evaluators in high school academic planning efforts (Kennedy & Datnow, 2011). Conversely, there exists a larger body of international research on student engagement

that promotes the idea of students as active stakeholders in educational planning (Dunne & Owen, 2013). Nonetheless, there is a lack of research-based insight in the United States into potential benefits that students bring to these new academic programs. OCC has had a long history of engaging multiple stakeholders and of being a leader in organizational change initiatives, particularly in career pathway models (Clarke, 2014). The college has incorporated career pathways and similar programs such as Linked Learning that connect academics and technical skills in a supportive environment. Because of this history and continued work in the area of career pathways, OCC offers an excellent opportunity to study the outcomes of engaging students in the development and implementation of California Career Pathways Trust Fund career pathways between 2014 and 2018. To date, student perceptions, attitudes, and lived experiences associated with that involvement have not been the subject of empirical research.

Research exists about the role high school students can play as active participants in their high schools through democratic schools (Apple & Beane, 1995) or as active participants in programs (Kennedy & Datnow, 2011), but no similar studies exist regarding community college students in career pathways. As these career pathways programs are being developed in community colleges, it would benefit the field of educational institutions undergoing this collaborative programming to understand what community college students, because of their nontraditional status, can bring to academic planning and organizational change conversations. By delving deeper into this topic, results of the present study have value to the field of community college practitioners and policymakers as to the role these stakeholders play in organizational change.

Problem Statement

The review of the literature resulted in several unanswered questions about organizational change in community colleges relevant to any career pathway model, specifically as the literature related to stakeholder engagement in these organizational change efforts. The organizational change roles that faculty, administrators, local employers, and students have in career pathway program initiatives at community colleges has not been defined and requires further inquiry. Additionally, of note is that no single model for the development and implementation of a career pathway program has been universally accepted by community colleges. Because of the skills gap, however, the urgency for educational institutions to make substantive investments in skills-focused educational initiatives has grown, and many stakeholders are currently seeking answers to questions about merit, implementation, and long-term outcomes.

Purpose and Significance

This purpose of the qualitative case study was to identify and document the perspectives, attitudes, and lived experiences of students, faculty, and administrators at OCC, and local employers of OCC graduates regarding the implementation of the organizational change process of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant. The aims of the case study were to identify each class of stakeholder and their respective roles in the organizational change process, how each was engaged (or not) in the decision-making process, how institutional leadership took part in program development, and the results of the process in terms of its objectives. Results include identification of strategies that stakeholders used to engage in the process, and how the decisions resulting from their decision-making were implemented (or not) by program administrators. The nature and extent to which students engaged in the decision-making process through this organizational change initiative was also explored.

Community college practitioners may find value in the results of the present study, especially in situations where multiple stakeholders such as students, faculty, administrators, and local employers are engaged in career pathway initiatives between high schools and community colleges. This is especially relevant to those roles stakeholders fulfill in the organizational change process for any program that redesigns the current paradigm of education from its two-pronged mission—an academic college-preparatory option and a career and technical education option—to a new college *and* career readiness framework (Oakes & Saunders, 2008). How a combined college *and* career mission is used to engage multiple stakeholders in implementation of career pathway programs was explored in this study. The collection and analysis of data with which to provide further knowledge to educational institutions undergoing organizational change efforts in communities was undertaken. After four years of California Career Pathways Trust Fund grants, local and state stakeholders are curious to understand the merit, implementation, and long-term outcome of career pathway programs. How educational institutions have used these investments in skills-focused educational initiatives to engage stakeholders to meet the demands of a highly competitive global economy and workforce were investigated in this study.

Research Questions

For qualitative studies, Irvine, Drew, and Sainsbury (2013) contended that research questions should encourage subjectivity, the expression of emotions, be open-ended, and explore *how* and *why* questions. Earlier discussion of the skills gap affecting future employer demand, as well as the nature of this type new organizational change effort with the variety of stakeholders suggest several research questions as follows:

RQ1: What are the perspectives, attitudes, and lived experiences of students, faculty, administrators at OCC about their roles in the organizational change process of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant?

RQ2: What are the perspectives, attitudes, and lived experiences of students, faculty, administrators at OCC about how deeply and effectively they engaged in decision-making relative to implementation of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant?

RQ3: What are the perspectives, attitudes, and lived experiences of students, faculty, administrators at OCC about the level of engagement and participation of organizational leadership in the design and development of the career pathway program?

RQ4: What are the perspectives, attitudes, and lived experiences of students, faculty, administrators at OCC about the outcome of the career pathways program changes relative to their agreed upon objectives?

Results provide information with which to inform community college stakeholders about how the California Career Pathways Trust Fund investment was carried out at OCC and recommended practices that might improve the results of future investments in career pathways development.

Theoretical Framework

The theories that guided the framework of this study were Kotter's (1996, 1998, 2012) eight stages of organizational change, Actor Network Theory (Law, 1992; Macaulay, Yue, & Thurlow, 2010; Ritzer, 2005) and the Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2000). These theories guided the data collection strategies as well as the research protocols that were developed for this study. These theories provided a greater understanding of the complex network of actors, agencies, and stakeholder perspectives involved in the organizational change

process of the career pathways programs at OCC. Each theory provided a framework that encompassed the complexity of human factors, as well as institutional drivers that dictated the levels of engagement, influence, and involvement in the California Career Pathways Trust Fund.

Kotter's (1996) eight stages of organizational change has been vetted through multiple case studies with small, medium, and large organizations that have undergone organizational change efforts. Kotter's eight stages include:

1. Creating a sense of urgency that requires a percentage of the overall company to be behind the organizational change so they can go "beyond the normal call of duty to produce a significant change" (Kotter, 2012, p. 37). The sense of urgency enables cooperation among staff to move beyond the complacency that often limits transformations within organizations. If a sense of urgency is not established, then, as Kotter contends, employees "will find a thousand ingenious ways to withhold cooperation" (p. 38).

2. Creating a guiding coalition requires the participation of a "powerful force" that can sustain the process while also understanding the difficulty of the change that the organizational guiding coalition is undertaking (Kotter, 2012, p. 53). This guiding coalition requires the recruitment of the "right" individuals that share a certain level of trust, but also a sense of purpose and objective. Individuals in this guiding coalition should possess certain traits such as coming from a position of power, holding necessary expertise, established credibility and proven leadership skills.

3. Developing a vision and strategy is a "central component of all great leadership" (Kotter, 2012, p. 70). A vision provides implicit and explicit direction as to why individuals should strive to create a common future. A vision and strategy help to clarify the direction,

motivates people to act and helps coordinate those actions for the common vision. Vision helps clarify the creation of strategies, but also helps to remove conflicting initiatives or actions.

4. Communicating the change vision is creating a common understanding among all those involved in the organizational change initiative for a common direction and goal. For certain staff, particularly managers, this common understanding might be difficult because of their limited scope as transactional leaders. To truly have a transformational vision it “requires those on the guiding coalition to spend a few hundred hours collecting information, digesting, considering alternatives, and eventually making choices” (Kotter, 2012, p. 89).

5. Empowering broad-based action requires the careful analysis of the barriers that can and will impede change, providing training required to bring organizational change agents to the same level of understanding, and lastly the ability to align existing systems that support the vision that create broad-based action (Kotter, 2012, p. 106).

6. Generating short-term wins is about planning short-term results that are aligned to the overall organizational change strategy but that are able to be seen by all involved and not involved in change. As Kotter posited, the short-term wins must be visible, unambiguous and clearly related to the overall organizational change effort (p. 126).

7. Consolidating gains and producing more change argues that organizational change cannot be celebrated until equilibrium is achieved and until the change has been imbedded into organizational culture. The interconnections and inter-dependability of organizations must also be acknowledged and built into the overall organizational change vision and strategy. The interconnections of organizations mean that you can rarely move just one element by itself to achieve organizational change (Kotter, 2012, p. 142).

8. Anchoring new approaches in the culture almost guarantees that the organizational change will be successful. Organizational culture encompasses organizational behaviors, norms and shared values that are indoctrinated unto all staff at the organization at that point in time (Kotter, 2012, p. 159). Indoctrination of an organization change strategy does not necessarily mean a new culture, but rather aligning existing norms, behaviors and values to meet the vision and strategy of the new organizational effort.

Kotter's eight stages provided a guiding framework for developing the qualitative protocols that took into account the overall vision and strategy that was developed at OCC by administrators and leaders to implement the California Career Pathways Trust Fund. Utilizing this organizational change framework allowed the researcher to capture organizational changes stages that took place through multiple perspectives, but with a similar structured and progressive questionnaire influenced by the eight-stage process.

Kotter's (1996) eight-stage process of organizational change provides structural processes with which to understand the change process. However, humans and non-human actors, such a documentation, larger systemic policies and absence of key stakeholders also play a role in the change process. For this reason, the Actor Network Theory, according to Macaulay et al. (2010), is an approach that was used for disentangling the actors involved in the network of change that took place through the California Career Pathways Trust Fund at OCC. Relevant to the present study was how the network of actors, both seen and unseen, and non-human factors such as policies, procedures, and texts, played a role in the design and development of the career pathways program at OCC. Actor Network Theory also offered the researcher the opportunity to be "aware of the impact of the research itself" because it allowed the researcher to understand that he was part of the network under study (Macauley et al., 2010, p. 339) because of the

researchers experience as an education policy manager for a special interest organization in California. As a person, familiar with educational reform movements in California, the researcher of this study had a deeper experience of the connection between this California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant and other similar organizational change efforts that had taken place in California prior to the California Career Pathways Trust Fund. Actor-Network Theory offered the opportunity for the researcher to acknowledge, but also respect, his role as an actor in this research in the educational sector and utilize that experience to uncover the larger organizational change efforts that impacted the California Career Pathways Trust Fund at OCC.

Actor Network Theory also allowed the researcher to discover how OCC networks experienced resistance due to the abundance of staff turnover that plagued the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant at OCC. The stability and process that Actor Network Theory provided to organize the activities of the change agents was also a benefit of this theory. This allowed the researcher to place the California Career Pathways Trust Fund in the larger context of organizational change taking place within community colleges during this period. Lastly, Actor Network Theory offered the opportunity to gauge the enrollment, established roles and authority, and how actors became indispensable to the process to which they were engaged (Ritzer, 2005). As a result of this application, it was noted that one administrator was especially instrumental in the progress of the grant.

By utilizing the Actor Network Theory framework, the researcher observed non-human actors that were not primary subjects of this study but that played a role in the outcome of this grant. These actors were the additional grants and organizational change efforts that were taking place simultaneously that might have helped advance the goals of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund. Specifically, the passage of the California State Plan for Career Technical

Education in 2008, which provided significant strategies that initiated several change efforts within high schools and community colleges that created an organizational change movement had an impact on this study. However, Actor Network Theory was not inclusive of the assumptions and attitudes that stakeholders brought to their involvement in the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant. For this reason, Self-Determination Theory was additionally consulted because it provided a vehicle for identifying the basic psychological behavior of individuals in the pursuit of goal-directed tasks that stakeholders might manifest while engaging in career pathways programming (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2000). Deci and Ryan (1985, 2000) argued there is an association between an individual's need to internalize and integrate values and regulations and the need to find intrinsic meaning in an activity or task. Deci and Ryan (1985) conclude that, without internalizing meaning related to activities, individuals cannot gain satisfaction from those activities (e.g., work or play) and will engage in them only to fulfill responsibility. This conclusion fit perfectly with the cultural change that took place for the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant to truly become institutionalized at OCC (Kotter, 2012). Furthermore, in organizational change initiatives, the goal is to advance programs that can be institutionalized, and if individuals are not satisfied with their activities, there is a lower likelihood that the programs will survive their pilot stages. By using Self Determination Theory, the researcher was able to observe that the level of intrinsic motivations was a factor that helped advance the California Career Pathways Trust Fund even as staff turnover affected OCC. Self Determination Theory provided a framework for understanding the individuals' determination in engaging in career pathway programming and the results of having stakeholders find meaning and satisfaction in their grant activities. Deci and Ryan (1985, 2000) and La Guardia, Ryan,

Couchman, Deci, & Insko (2000) contended that individuals must satisfy these needs to work at an optimal level because they are innate, universal, and apply to every human being.

Overview of the Methodology

Yin (2014) defined a case study as an approach that provides an avenue for assessment of real-life events in a holistic manner. Yin asserted that case study research is the preferred research design for the examination of contemporary events, such as the efforts of high schools and community colleges to develop career pathway programs. Additionally, Wolcott (2001) described the qualitative approach as providing a broader perspective of understanding by not solely relying on a single form of method (p. 89). Qualitative research supports the opportunity to explore, explain, or describe a specific phenomenon (Cairney & St. Denny, 2014). Creswell (2015) also described how qualitative research views the individual realities that human beings envision as they experience life, each in their own way. Case studies can give a framework for wide-ranging exploration of problems and possible solutions (Irvine et al., 2013; Yin, 2014). Complex social phenomenon was the underlying context for this study, and the use of the case study provided the ability to enhance the knowledge in this area of organizational change in education as it has for several other social science settings in psychology, sociology, economics, political science, business, community planning, and social work (Yin, 2014). A qualitative method with a case study design was believed appropriate to carry out the goals of this study. The design included both interviews and the collection and analysis of documents.

Data collection was two-fold. First, the researcher collected artifacts for analysis that were created, such as documents and forms (Bolman & Deal, 2008), during the development of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund at OCC. The researcher used this documentation to explore the steps that were taken by grant administrators to design a career pathway model and to

discover which stakeholders were engaged in the design process. Second, the researcher conducted interviews with students, faculty, and administrators who were involved in the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant between the years of 2014 and 2018. Although it was the intention to interview employers, a key stakeholder in career pathways models, it was revealed through the documentation process that employers were absent from meetings and thus were not included in this study. The interviews were implemented to explore the perspectives, attitudes, and lived experiences of stakeholders while they were involved in program development and implementation. The researcher designed an interview protocol structured around each research question with additional interview questions guided by Self-Determination (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2000) and Actor Network Theories (Law, 1992) that provided opportunities for participants to reveal their experiences and motivations relative to the research question.

The first step in the procedure was to obtain a letter of permission from OCC to engage in the study. Following that, the researcher submitted a complete dissertation research proposal to the California State University at Northridge Institutional Review Board (IRB) for approval of the project. Primary selection criteria for each stakeholder group was (a) for the students, that they were enrolled and held student leadership positions during the 2014–2018 period of development of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant, (b) for the faculty, that they were included in the design of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant program, and (c) for the administrators, that managed the development of California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant.

The researcher sent an invitation to participate and a letter of explanation about the investigation to prospective participants until a convenience sample of six participants agreed to participate and represented a majority of the stakeholder groups. The researcher administered

the interviews at a time and place convenient for participants. Ethical assurances of confidentiality and anonymity for all participants was extremely important and was clearly communicated in writing to participants of this study.

Participants were given the opportunity to develop their own pseudonym to ensure confidentiality throughout the study. In-person and Zoom webinars were used to conduct the interviews. The researcher audio recorded each of the interviews, each of which were schedule for approximately 1-hour. Audio recordings were professionally transcribed using the online transcription software Rev.com. Transcription software enabled the researcher to listen to and read the results of the interviews multiple times for cognition. The researcher coded each transcript with NVivo 12 software to allow the identification of codes, themes and for analysis. The NVivo 12 software allowed the researcher to upload files (audio, text, and past documents) into a secure and password protected personal-computer-based program that allowed for coding of words and phrases and created lists to identify themes and patterns. This process aided the researcher in the final step in qualitative case study, the data analysis (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Cairney and St. Denny (2015) believed that research participants create their own individual realities, which is an assumption in qualitative research. The researcher used this understanding to capture these truths and believed that these themes constituted the reality that each group experienced through the organizational change process at OCC. This research assumed that participants included in the study from OCC were an adequate sample of perspectives that engaged in the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant between 2014 and 2018. Validity of the results assumed that participants answered questions accurately and

truthfully based on their perspectives, attitudes, and lived experiences (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016).

Since the data was limited to a single local setting, and a single community college, data may not be generalizable to include all career pathway efforts statewide, which is an important limitation. Also, the perception of certain limitations exists, including potential biases and researcher misrepresentations (Kirkwood & Price, 2013). As an active policy and programmatic advocate of educational reform efforts in California, the researcher is familiar with the development of career pathway models throughout the state and familiar with the prominence of the research site in ongoing educational reform efforts. Similarly, the researcher was able to make the connection between this effort and other organizational change efforts in California that helped to advance the goals of this California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant.

Acknowledgement of this direct connection in career pathway modeling helped address issues of bias that might have existed between the researcher and the organizational change initiative at OCC. By utilizing certain principles of the Actor Network Theory such as holding no assumptions and striving for protocol symmetry in the sample size as well as not subscribing to certain agency and structure of actors with networks, the researcher helped to mitigate bias within the research (Ritzer, 2005). Therefore, actors within this grant were seen as equal to all in their significance in this study and only achieve significance through the networks that were created and that gave authority to them as described through their engagement of this grant.

The researcher's focus on the non-human factors, such as the documents that were created to advance of the outcomes of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant and co-existing organizational change efforts further mitigated bias by having a triangulation of data that included the literature review, document review and interviews. An objective view of

documents assisted in understanding the steps taken to engage stakeholders in the grant. Finally, the researcher planned to exclude from the study potential participants with whom he has or has had a close working or personal association, although those relationships did not exist.

Delimitations are factors that define the specific scope of the study (Creswell, 2015; Muijs, 2011). The study was conducted in the state of California. Only six participants were selected in 2018 from student leaders, faculty, and administrators at OCC. Six participants were included in the study with two from each of the three stakeholder groups. Additionally, the employer perspective was not present and was a significant limitation of this study.

Definitions of Terms

Ambiguous concepts and terms may influence the outcome of the studies (Neuman, 2011); thus, defining terms aid the reader in understanding the meaning and context of the discussions. The following terms were used within this study pursuant to the definitions presented:

Career pathway: Jenkins (2006) defined career pathways as "a process of adapting existing [educational] programs and services, and adding new ones, to enable students to advance to successively higher levels of education and employment in target sectors" (p. 6). Additionally, the career pathways that are focus for the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant fall within fifteen identified career pathways in the state of California.

Engagement: Engagement is a continuous event, for instance, an ongoing management responsibility, which must be viewed as a two-way, dynamic process (Murray & Montanari, 1986).

Public sector: Public sector organizations are the formal institutions of the state spanning the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government (Koliba, Meek, & Zia, 2010).

Organizational change: Organizational change implies the application of managerial and leadership processes, methods and techniques that will lead to achieving the objectives imposed by a new strategic orientation (Vladimir-Codrin, 2014, p. 69).

Private sector: The private sector encompasses all for-profit entities that are not administered by a government agency (Jinping, 2013).

Skills gap: California's higher education system is not keeping up with the economy's changing needs. Failing to keep up with the demand for skilled workers could curtail economic growth, limit economic mobility, and increase inequality (Johnson, 2014).

Stakeholders: Freeman (1984) defined stakeholders as any individual or group that can affect or be affected by the achievement of an organization's objectives.

Organization of the Dissertation

The organization of this dissertation follows this sequence: Chapter 1 contains a preliminary review of the literature leading to a statement of the problem and the purpose of study. The research questions based on the outcome of the review of literature are stated. A theoretical foundation for the study and a summary of the methodology, together with assumptions, limitations, and delimitations of the study are presented.

Chapter 2 contains an assessment of literature connected to organizational change theory, organizational change in the context of education, career pathways in education, stakeholder engagement in higher education including a consideration of leadership styles, and student engagement in academic planning. Chapter 3 contains a detailed explanation of the methods and procedures that guided the conduct of the study. Chapter 4 contains the results that emerged

from the data collection. Chapter 5 is a summary of the findings and conclusions based on the findings, a discussion of the connection between the theoretical framework and the results, recommendations for policy or practice changes, and possible future research on student engagement and organizational change in community colleges.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The present qualitative case study was an effort to explore the perspectives, attitudes, and lived experiences of students, faculty, and administrators about their role in the organizational change process, the way they were engaged in decision making, the level of that engagement, participation of institutional leadership during the change process, and the outcomes of the career pathways relative to their objectives. Preliminary sections include the summarized history of education, both nationally and in California is summarized. Once again turning to history to provide relevant background for the present study, a section about the advent of career pathways is presented. The final two sections of this chapter turn to the individuals involved in organizational change and the connection, if any, to career pathways programs. Stakeholder engagement is discussed, and finally, institutional leadership of all stakeholders are explored.

History of Education

Nationally

Education in early American colonial settlements was focused on the passing of life and survival skills from one generation to another. As education began to be offered by primary schools, those families that could afford education for their children were able to offer more formalized and structured education in areas of literacy, religion, and trades (Chesapeake College, 2015). Children from poor families did not receive studies in literacy and religion, but instead they engaged in apprenticeships to gain practical workplace skills. Mentors would teach younger apprentices the skills and crafts of their trades and in turn would require free labor from the apprentices. As small businesses became more sophisticated in the middle of the 1700s it was necessary to develop more formalized educational systems to help support larger companies with more specialized worker needs. This led to the creation of early grammar schools in

secondary education that educated youth with more practical literacy skills that could qualify them for a job at a local company (Chesapeake College, 2015). The evolution of the US educational system occurred in the latter part of the eighteenth century. Compulsory education through the 6th grade was begun across America by an Act of Congress in 1796 (National Archives, 2019).

Education in America stabilized and grew in parallel with the growth of large companies in oil, utilities, and car manufacturing, as well the growth of large government institutions that were created during the era of the New Deal (Boyd, Kerchner & Blyth, 2008). At the same time, the United States was undergoing several challenges to its Jim Crow laws in the South as well as the unequal conditions and inadequate funding to schools that plagued most states, including California (Alexander, 2010). The economic and social challenges such as the often reinforced existing class- and race-based inequalities that permeated through education in California (Oakes & Saunders, 2008; Rose 2013) that were plaguing the US during this time created the opportunities and challenges that would reach the career pathways conversations of today.

California

As one of the most Western states, California, began to formalize its educational system and offered structured curricula to youth in the state in the 1849. The framers of the California Constitution believed in the role of education in all aspects of the culture and created the position of State Superintendent of Public Instruction, a job to be filled by statewide vote (California Department of Education, 2009). The early arguments over the structured delivery and management of education became contentious points, with early Governors of California such as John Bigler, who asked, to no avail, that the California legislature of 1853 abolish the role of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction (California Department of Education, 2009).

Communities, legislators, and special interest groups have continued to play a role in the California educational system from its inception in 1849 to present times. This “iron triangle” (Koliba et al., 2010) of educational institutions, legislative bodies, and interest groups have played a large role in the organizational change initiatives and commissions that focused on education throughout the history of the California Department of Education. As education became more widespread in California and as the need for vocational and further college-level and career training became more important to local communities, school districts began to offer these options at local high schools (Brossman & Roberts, 1973).

Concurrently, in higher education a plan was brewing in the California educational system that would align the community college, California State Universities and the University of California system. The California Master Plan was a series of policies that would create the current system in place today. This three-tiered plan created a system where each tier accepted a percentage of students in the University of California (UC) system (the top 13% of students), the California State University (CSU) system (the top 41% of students) and the California Community Colleges (100% of all other students and returning nontraditional students) (Douglass, 2000). To this day, the Master Plan has not been revised although the need of communities in California has changed dramatically over the last 50 years (Oakes & Saunders, 2008).

However, as a result of the Master Plan, high school students in California had options immediately after graduation. Similarly, older students in need of upskilling or reskilling had the option to enroll in California community colleges. To date, California community colleges enroll more students than the UC and CSU systems combined (Johnson & Cuellar Mejia, 2017). Because of the open-access system of the California community colleges, the colleges face

immense challenges as they serve traditional college students as well as older students who may not be prepared for college-level courses, and who may also face multiple personal barriers to their success in education (Rose, 2013). However, this challenge has also been an advantage for community colleges since it offers all students a rich classroom as well as creating a campus full of diverse student perspectives.

The current diversity of the community college student population was not always celebrated as it is presently. With the advancement of the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s and the growth of migrant communities in California in the 1970s, certain school districts began to address their system's challenges and disproportionate outcomes of diverse student groups (Boyd et al., 2008). California and the City of Los Angeles began a series of reform movements beginning in 1967 and continuing through the 1990s to address the socioeconomic challenges of students, the economic segregation of communities of color, as well as larger societal issues of income inequality (Boyd et al., 2008; Oakes & Saunders, 2008).

As efforts to improve outcomes became a focal point in the nation and in California, certain changes to common standards, assessments, school performance, and accountability became important to the development of the California educational system. To this day, the college and career readiness discourse has been evolving and adapting to new pedagogies, all of which can be traced back to the introduction of formal education at the beginning of the last century. As the chasm between Career Technical Education and traditional academic programs has continued to expand, there is a movement to reconnect these disciplines in a combined college and career readiness framework, also known as career pathways.

Advent of Career Pathways

Internationally

Several countries have instituted more aggressive solutions to the lack of educational attainment of their students. Experiential learning, project-based learning, and attachment concepts have served as foundational principles for several countries implementing more engaging experiences for students in the classroom, especially for career-focused instruction. Countries in Europe provide a direct connection to work-based learning and encourage students to choose degrees and career pathways where they can get immediate experience during high school (Symonds et al., 2011). This direct connection to the workplace allows students to understand the connection between their schoolwork and after-school life employment. As Symonds et al. discovered, European “countries typically introduce students to a broad cluster of occupations (e.g., health care or IT) before narrowing the focus of training in the third year” of high school (p. 15). While these pathways have created greater productivity in their respective countries, the United States and several states has begun to investigate how these practices might be replicated and adopted to fit the U.S. model of education.

United States

The lack of robust career pathway offerings makes the United States less competitive in the international job market than its European counterparts. The U.S. educational system, because of privacy rights and other regulations, has been a closed system that does not allow for much involvement with local businesses or community partners (California Competes, 2018). Schools are often used only for book-based instruction and special school events. During all other times, schools are limited in their community involvement. This isolated operation of the

school system limits the opportunity for community involvement and decreases the chances that employers can partner with school districts. Although the US has adopted several programs of study that have supported Career Technical Education programs, to this date, the adoption of clear career pathways model has not taken place.

California

Currently, high schools and community colleges throughout California are attempting to change their cultures, their staff, and their students to adapt to a new paradigm that includes employers and a collaborative community system with the help from several state initiatives that began with the California State Plan for Career Technical Education and progressed with the recommendations of the Student Success Act of 2012 (Ritterbrown, 2016). Career pathways are becoming more popular both in their funding incentives, but also as a model that combines several practices of academic engagement. Additionally, this new system is one that promotes greater integration with community partners and businesses, greater contextualization of instruction, and a regional approach to program development.

With the fastest growing sectors of the U.S. economy concentrated in finance, healthcare, business services, information technology, and education, more jobs will require higher-level degrees leaving little room for high school educated workers (Anstine, 2013). High schools and community colleges, along with their faculty, administration, community-based organizations, and industry partners need to create engaging activities that build ownership and self-efficacy for students as they pursue academic courses with career themes. The career pathways model incorporates several practices, that if successful, will create greater engagement among students, faculty, administrators, and businesses.

Legislative bodies have recently adopted a mindset of greater integration and are looking at Small Learning Communities and California Partnership Academies models as ways to combat the lack of useful outcomes and criticisms employers have for the field of education (Oakes & Saunders, 2008). The collaborative and integrated approach that is suggested by Small Learning Communities and California Partnership Academies models is intended to improve the life outcomes of students in California, especially for school districts with lagging student outcomes for students of color and other minority populations. The career pathways investments infused the Small Learning Communities and California Partnership Academies approaches to advance integration of high schools, community colleges, and community resources to meet the demands of society (Assembly Bill 86, 2013). Through the California Career Pathways Trust Fund, the state of California has made unprecedented investments in organizational change initiatives that will change the future of education in the state.

Through the California Career Pathways Trust Fund, local school districts need to engage in organizational strategies and stakeholder engagement that can change the direction for students in terms of career and college options after high school (Harbour & Wolgemuth, 2015; Rodicio et al., 2014). Now that change has begun at high schools and community colleges through these California Career Pathways Trust Fund grants, it is important to see how individuals within these organizational change initiatives interact and contribute to the agreed-upon objectives. The intent of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund investment was to create a more integrated and collaborative educational system with community resources to support students. As Kennedy and Datnow (2011, p. 1248) indicated students are the presumed beneficiaries of school improvement, and thus can be a key stakeholder in these organizational change efforts.

Two schools of thought exist in California about the role of high school education: one supports a college-prep-for-all agenda, and one supports making the connection to employers and jobs more evident (Oakes & Saunders, 2008). The evolution of the debate of college and career readiness has recently created a third option, one that supports combining *both* college *and* career readiness for students. The connection between college and career readiness is not a new concept in California. In 1981, California began exploring the idea of college and career readiness through small learning communities with career themes, and by 1985, California state government was funding these efforts through the CPAs (Stern, Raby, & Dayton, 2010).

In the larger educational context, these small learning communities did not seem to slow down the field of education from continuing to push for a college-prep-for-all with a vocational track option for some students. However, reform efforts, such as the Annenberg Challenge (Wohlstetter, Malloy, Chau, & Polhemus, 2003), the 1990 amendments to the Carl D. Perkins Act, and the 1994 Schools-to-Work Opportunity Act (Oakes & Saunders, 2008) helped give shape to a greater connection between college-prep-for-all and career readiness programs. Additionally, several other pieces of legislation moved pathway programs forward (see Figure 1); other legislation, such as Doing What Matters and the Strong Workforce Program, are currently moving high school and community college districts to engage in organizational change efforts that support college and career readiness (California Legislative Information, 2019).

These college and career reform efforts encourage organizational change at local institutions who want to determine how to increase outcomes and performance for students in college tracks as well as vocational tracks. One of the key takeaways from these educational reforms was an understanding that, regardless of the efforts undertaken, “stakeholders must be

actively engaged in reform efforts” (Wohlstetter et al., 2003, p. 399). The following section is a discussion of stakeholder engagement in the educational sector.

Organizational Change

Organizational change in education should be viewed as a “process of institutional change” rather than as a unitary, immediate initiative that addresses all the challenges for all stakeholders all at once (Boyd, Kerchner, & Blyth, 2008, p. 1). The process of institutionalizing change to a career pathway program requires the involvement of many stakeholders within a high school and community college, each with their own interests and agendas. Leaders in the community college system and their specific roles as change agents in orchestrating organizational change has been documented (Duncan & Ball, 2011). Other researchers (Nelson, 1998) have studied cross-functional teams as agents of cultural change at institutions and have completed the development of leadership programs (Elsner, 1984) to advance organizational changes. These themes continue to resonate and be relevant in the research and impact on community colleges (Kezar, 2001).

Townsend and Twonbly (1998) studied the feminist perspective on organizational change at community colleges, and Kezar, Lester, and Yang (2010) as well as Kezar (2011) researched community agencies and their roles in organizational change. Faculty and their roles in management and shared governance involving decision-making has also been studied (Benson & Malone, 1987; Levin, Kater, & Wagoner, 2006), as have businesses and their roles in partnering with community colleges to meet immediate local employer demands (Cooper, 2014). Clarke (2014) investigated counselors and their engagement in career pathways, while McMahon, Mason, and Paisley (2009) investigated counselors’ involvement as leaders in organizational change models. Notwithstanding, the literature is absent of any empirical studies related to, or of

the direct utility of the perceptions, attitudes, and lived experiences of students, faculty, and administrators as well as local employers about (a) their role in the organizational change process relative to the design and development of a California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant, (b) how deeply and effectively they were engaged in decision making relative to implementation of the grant, (c) the level of engagement and participation of institutional leadership in the design and development of the career path program, and (d) the outcome of the career path programmatic changes in terms of their preferred objectives.

Engagement

Engagement is not a one-time event, but rather an ongoing management responsibility, that must be viewed as a two-way, dynamic process (Murray & Montanari, 1986). In journals of science where stakeholder engagement seems to have more prominence, findings are that proactive engagement of stakeholders leads to greater resilience and a culture of engaged and participatory community members. Issues of improvement, preparation, and reform require involvement of stakeholders, according to Mojtahedi and Oo (2017). They note:

Stakeholder is an entity without the support of which an institution would not survive.

Stakeholders have an interest in the actions of an organization, and they have the ability to influence or be affected by the achievement of the organization's objectives.

Stakeholders are also persons [or entities] who give an input in decision making as well as who benefit from the results of decision makings. (p. 40)

Engagement of stakeholders before, during, and after is important to the science sector and their community and organizational outcomes. Similar research within the educational context, particularly those dealing with career pathways programming, is lacking.

In education, engagement has “numerous competing meanings, definitions, conceptualizations, and assumptions” (Dunne & Owen, 2013, p. 1). Engagement can also mean that of students in classroom, the agency of students to engage, or not, and the social-culture impact and organizational habitus that engages students (Kahu, 2013). The literature tends to be primarily focused on student engagement in 4-year universities or high schools (Apple & Beane, 1995; Hope, 2014; Kahu, 2013; Kennedy & Datnow, 2011), but there is a lack of research for engaging stakeholders, such as administrators, faculty, students and employers, in the community college setting and in career pathways programming. Literature is less available on the engagement of students at community colleges in organizational change initiatives. Further, stakeholders in community colleges is not a clearly articulated concept. Stakeholders in four-year institutions do have a presence, but the word “stakeholder” does not translate into the unique setting of an open-access two-year public higher education institution. Community colleges, especially the 114 campuses in California, provide unique services and outcomes to benefit local workforce needs, student matriculation, professional and personal skills development courses, and educational community cohesion.

And thus, their stakeholders are vast and varied depending on initiative, focus, geography or goals. As Kater (2017) indicates, “community colleges are reactive and adaptive institutions to local, state, and regional needs, yet also influenced by national and international forces . . . state governmental policies and behaviors” (p. 236). As a result, their stakeholders are varied and can include more stakeholders than the scope of this study. Moving beyond engagement is the idea of active participation by stakeholders in academic planning. One unique characteristic of the California community colleges is that faculty have “vast, unprecedented powers” over academic and professional matters (Shireman, 2013). It is not clear from the literature which

external stakeholders in community colleges should be engaged in academic planning beyond faculty, although under California Education Code, Career Technical Education programs must have “extensive business and industry involvement, as evidenced by not less than one annual business and industry advisory committee meeting and planned business and industry involvement in program activities” (California Department of Education, 2017b). Beyond employers it is unclear what other stakeholders should be involved in academic planning and their level of participation.

Bartley, Dimenäs, and Hallnäs (2010) concluded that participation can be formal and informal. They argue that:

formal participation is collective, from the aspect that students exercise formal participation through representation on boards and committees. *Informal participation* is individual and concerns students’ informal opportunities of influencing their own situation and education, e.g., through course evaluations and other forms of evaluation.
(p. 151)

In South Africa, enrollment and retention in academic programs has been associated with factors that are not solely pedagogical and they include issues of safety and security, social status, relationship to academic institution (Angelopulo, 2013). Although the engagement of students in Angelopulo’s study was on academic programs it provides good reference for the variety of factors that limit a student’s involvement. At California community colleges, students face numerous socio-economic barriers to success all of which limit what amount of time, resources and agency they have to engage beyond their prescribed academic goals (Bailey et al., 2015; Hope, 2014; Oakes & Saunders, 2008; Rose, 2013).

Similar to personal barriers that cause a lack of participation are also systemic and cultural barriers that limit the participation of students and faculty to the larger community. Boyer (1996) foreshadows a focus on student credentialing and the preference of tenured positions with esoteric academic focus that “encourages disengagement and even penalizes professors whose work becomes useful to nonacademics” (p. 14). Simply put, for stakeholder engagement and participation to be more prevalent in educational settings, particularly at community colleges, incentives are needed for students, faculty, administrators and employers. It must be stated that engagement and participation does not happen in a vacuum. It requires humans, and they bring their complex lives and situations, particularly in urban settings, that limit engagement and participation.

These events in our personal lives, professional lives, and communities are functions of internal and external drivers such as environment, politics, or personal changes that determine the direction of people’s actions relative to those changes (Birnbaum, 1998; Kezar, 2001). Those same events when applied to organizations take more intentional and strategic actions that have been the study of behavioral scientists since the field’s inception (Levin, 1998a; Shafritz & Hyde, 2012). Behavioral scientists have attempted to interpret and analyze these events in our complex work environments along with the effects and roles of the individuals and network of groups that played a role in these organizational changes (Duncan & Ball, 2011; Jones-Kavalier & Roueche, 2010; Kotter, 1996; Nelson, 1998; Pasmore & Fagans, 1992; Salamon, 2011).

Stakeholders

Stakeholders is a term that has been borrowed from the private sector context to describe individuals and clusters of individuals that benefit, or not, directly or indirectly, from companies they are invested in. It was not until the seminal work of Freeman (1984), *Strategic*

Management: A Stakeholder Approach, that the model of identifying stakeholders and the responsibility that organizations have to them came into focus. Stakeholder theory became a way of describing the importance of stakeholders beyond just profit. In the context of other industries, such as education, stakeholders are equally important voices in organizational change efforts. Certain change efforts live or die by the engagement of their stakeholders (Kezar, 2001). Campbell (1997) suggests matter-of-factly, “Companies cannot survive unless they deliver value to their chosen stakeholders” (p. 449). In education, the most important stakeholders are students and faculty (Kennedy & Datnow, 2011).

Students

Students are the most powerful agents of change in an educational institution and are the direct beneficiaries of the educational system. They are the main stakeholders (Kennedy & Datnow, 2011). Students benefit from a relevant academic education that prepares them not only for careers, but also life. Educational systems live and die by the relevancy that they have with student populations. Therefore, as new reform efforts are developed within educational institutions, there is a greater appetite from all stakeholders, particularly students, for greater transparency, collaboration, and accountability.

In fact, as many studies have discovered, students are said to be involved in school reform, but when we look closer into these claims, we see that students are engaged to validate or evaluate programming (Termini, 2013). In fact, when we look at reform efforts, few have actively sought the participation of students in these organizational change initiatives (Kennedy & Datnow, 2011). As key stakeholder in their educational experience, students would benefit most from being engaged by their schools beyond surveys and evaluations. This issue is more relevant to the community college organizations where the fastest growing majority are students

with professional backgrounds who have also had prior experience and who can provide benefit to organizational change initiatives (Anderson, 2016).

Faculty

The other major stakeholder in educational institutions is the faculty or the teachers of these schools. Schroeder (2001) contended faculty are “powerful change advocates within their departments” and schools (p. 10). Faculty retention rates are remarkably stable across institutions and they hold the institutional knowledge and culture to affect change at their institutions (Ehrenberg, Kasper, & Rees, 1990). As the institutional knowledge holders and a key culture within each campus, faculty also have a key stakeholder role as educational institutions seek to undergo organizational change efforts. Research has documented the importance of them in all aspects of organizational change strategies and their roles in these changes (Schroeder, 2001). Their role is as important as that of students, and initiatives live or die by their engagement in organizational change initiatives.

Ironically, even though faculty are important stakeholders, there is still a lack of research that shows their engagement in shared decision making, especially as it relates to organizational change initiatives (Levin, 1998b). In fact, as Benson and Malone (1987) discovered, there is still ambiguity and controversy over issues of participatory decision making from the faculty perspective. Benson and Malone (1987) determined through their surveys of high school teachers that, although teachers are involved in some meetings regarding organization change, they feel their influence is low.

Administrators

As one of an educational institutions most prominent stakeholder, administrators play a key role in the direction of new organizational change initiatives. Additionally, administrators

are also actors within these systems and have specific needs and experiences that are part of organizational change efforts. Some of these needs revolve around the support needed, the communication required, and trust established through organizational change efforts (Jensen, 2011, p. 132). Administrators, because of their vantage point in organizations, sometimes do not see how their decisions and perspectives around organizational change might not be in sync with staff members. Nonetheless, their leadership positions make them important actors in the development of organizational change efforts, and they are key stakeholders to understand and learn from through qualitative case studies. Literature in this area touches on the role of senior leadership in organizational change, but it is not clear how other administrators, particularly grant administrators factor into organizational change (Birnbaum, 1988; Duncan & Ball, 2011).

Employers

Another important stakeholder and beneficiary of educational systems is the business sector. Business leaders are particularly interested in how students learn the skills and competencies that prepares them for the current workforce. Many businesses already interact with educational systems via business advisory committees through Career Technical Education departments at high schools and community colleges. Through the development of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund, businesses were directly involved in the creation of the legislation to build career pathways (California Department of Education, 2019).

Businesses are the final segment of the educational pipeline for students and they benefit greatly from a qualified and skilled student population. The educational system's outcomes to provide a critical and analytical workforce is key to the vitality of California businesses in meeting their goals (Bohn, 2014). Yet, as the economy changes to one that is more dependent on middle-skilled jobs that require some postsecondary technical credentials, the private sector is

now, more than ever, dependent on receiving a qualified workforce from educational providers (Kochan, Finegold, & Osterman, 2012).

In a global and competitive economy, it is essential that all human capital be maximized to its full potential. Employers look closely at the educational attainment of the communities that they want to serve, but they are cognizant of the future workforce they will need to run their businesses. For this reason, they look for communities with indicators for high educational attainment (Stone, 1991). If they are not able to find such communities, they are forced to import the talent or move to where the talent exists.

In Career Technical Education departments at community colleges, business input is key to determining whether the programs that are created are compatible with needed business competencies and skills. The California Career Pathways Trust Fund has a strong focus on careers that are high-growth and in high-demand. In California, these pathways are varied, but a common and constant thread is the connection to technology. As is the case throughout the world, technology has become a staple of our common existence. Technology has influenced all other sectors and is playing a pivotal role in the evolution of all sectors of the US economy. Therefore, the connection between education and businesses is one of obvious coexistence. This interconnection makes employers a key stakeholder in the advance of the career pathways models throughout California.

Legislators

Other stakeholders such as legislators are key to the development of California Career Pathways Trust Fund grants at the institutions because they are also very concerned about the lack of a qualified workforce. As the gatekeepers of the state's coffers, they stand to win or lose if the investments made in career pathways meet the needs of students and employers. If a large

portion of the population is not graduating from college, and if 58% of those that do graduate are not prepared for college-level courses, then these failures are of great interest to legislators (Carnevale & Rose, 2015). Of those students who are eventually able to take college-level courses and study full time, only fourteen of every hundred students will graduate from college on time four years later (Schaefer, 2011). What this means for California's economy is a lack of a high earning taxpayers, which equates to a lower tax base and a shrinking economy. With higher taxes and an unqualified workforce, businesses will not be able to stay in California to maximize profits and will go where they are able to attract a more qualified workforce.

Legislators, who are the trustees of the state, they are aware that the lack of taxes means fewer less resources for all other services that the state must provide. Lower educational attainment has been linked to teen pregnancies (Djamba, Davidson, & Aga, 2012) and other resource draining negative outcomes such increased as crime (Lochner & Moretti, 2003). The challenge for legislators is the inability to provide quality services with the declining wages and taxes.

Conclusions

From the perspective of outcomes, the key stakeholders are administrators, faculty, students, and employers of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund partnerships. The review of literature revealed an unbalanced and incomplete body of knowledge about how stakeholders contribute to the design, development, and evaluation of career pathways programs. The gap in literature includes a lack of a clear definition of the roles stakeholders should play and when they should be engaged in the design and development of career pathway models. Specifically, it is particularly unclear what role student leaders should play. Because of the skills gap, an urgency exists for educational institutions to make substantive investments in vocational-focused

educational initiatives. It is evident, based on the review of literature, that all stakeholders are currently questioning career pathways programs, their merit, how best to implement them, and what their long-term outcomes will be.

Organizational change in education should be a “process of institutional change” rather than a single, immediate initiative that addresses all the challenges at once (Boyd et al., 2008, p. 1). The process of institutionalizing change to a career pathway program requires the involvement of many stakeholders within a high school and community college, each with their own interests and agendas. Certain stakeholders, particularly in community colleges, have documented their specific roles and goals they are or were attempting to accomplish; an example, is the new focus on the Presidents of colleges as advocates for change (Duncan & Ball, 2011). In addition, cross-functional teams as agents of cultural change at institutions has been studied (Nelson, 1998), and developing leadership programs to advance organizational changes (Elsner, 1984) have been completed.

The feminist perspective in organizational change at community colleges has also been studied (Townsend & Twonbly, 1998), and community agencies and their roles in organizational change have been researched (Kezar, 2006). Faculty and their roles in management and shared governance in decision making have been studied (Benson & Malone, 1987; Kater, 2017; Levin, Kater, & Wagoner, 2006) as well as businesses and their roles in partnering with community colleges to meet industry demands (Cooper, 2014) has been studied. Finally, counselors and their engagement with stakeholders in organizational change and career pathways models (Clarke, 2014; McMahon et al., 2009) have been studied.

Over the course of the review of literature, it was discovered that attention has been given to the collaborations, coalitions, and other participatory elements of planned organizational

change strategies (Kotter, 1996). Literature acknowledged the need for partner involvement in the development of large organizational change initiatives in the private and public sectors and how their power, legitimacy, and urgency play a role in these efforts (Britner, 2012; Clement, 2005). The overarching theme is that participation by certain groups can be advantageous to the development of organizational change initiatives within institutions. These groups can vary by the affect they have, and are affected by, planned organizational change at an institution. Additionally, certain stakeholders view their success by the “attached leadership” they attribute to the progress of initiatives that produce positive outcomes (Sammons, Davis, Day, & Gu, 2014).

Certainly, as the seminal work of Freeman (1994) underscored, the role of stakeholders is far more important and active than the passive role of shareholder groups within the private sector. This belief is more important now than it was in the earlier times of the educational system in the United States. More recently there has been a shift in the thinking about how involved and how integrated schools should be in creating an educational pipeline from cradle to career perspective (Symonds et al., 2011). With the growth of technology-infused industries, educational institutions are now seen as a pivotal connection to the workforce. California community colleges are being required to undertake more collaborative approaches to their academic offerings by being involved in a new state unified plan that integrates thirteen California agencies (California Workforce Development Board, 2018).

As community colleges in California take greater steps to integrate with their high school partners, they naturally undertake large-scale planned organizational change that requires stakeholder engagement and support. Some research has been conducted (Kennedy & Datnow, 2011) to support the greater engagement of students in organizational decision making, although

the research is limited when it comes to students as active partners in organizational change strategies at community colleges involved in career pathways reforms. As surveyors and evaluators of programs, students are currently in the lowest levels of participation, but what has been recommended is the highest level of participation, an active state of students designing their educational experience themselves (Pasmore & Fagans, 1992, p. 385). Pasmore and Fagans (1992) suggested that there are more levels in between, such as contributing, challenging, and collaborating in their educational organizations, and it is up to the institutions to determine how to engage students at all levels.

One benefit of greater student engagement at the community college setting undergoing organizational change is the rich diversity and depth of the student experience in these institutions. Community college students are a diverse group. Across the country, one in every fourteen community college student already holds a bachelor's degree (Krupnick, 2015). In California, 50% of community college students are twenty-five years and older, and some of these individuals hold a higher level of what Pasmore and Fagans (1992) reference as cognitive complexity (p. 390). There is a need to understand what role, if any, these students along with administrators and faculty can play in the advancement of organizational change in education, particularly within career pathways programming.

Chapter 3: Methods

The California Career Pathways Trust Fund has provided secondary and postsecondary educational institutions with \$500 million to engage partners and stakeholders to create career pathways in the community college that directly connect with pathways that may already exist with local high schools. These partnerships plan to achieve academic pathways with career themes that lead to community college courses and eventually into high-wage jobs in high-demand fields in regional economies. The California Career Pathways Trust Fund grants offer unprecedented investments in California to meet demands of a growing skills gap that has threatened the state's global competitiveness.

To more deeply understand the shared experiences and perspectives of the stakeholders that were involved in the development of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund at OCC it is important to have each stakeholder give an account of their lived experiences. The shared experiences and voices of these stakeholders, student leaders, faculty, and administrators offer insight and provides future guidance for the field of community college education, which is currently undergoing significant organizational changes including integrated student support services, and guided pathways models (Bailey et al., 2015; Ritterbrown, 2016). Since the knowledge of these activities lives within the individuals that help administer the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grants, it was essential to utilize a qualitative design. This research method is based on compiling data through document review and interviews to understand human behavior (Rubin & Babbie, 2014). This approach allows the researcher to understand how the “complexities of the social and cultural world are experienced, interpreted and understood” by this group of stakeholders of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016, p. 10).

The complex process of understanding how several stakeholder groups interacted with each other through the California Career Pathways Trust Fund, the types of roles and authority that were created through the organizational change process, and how these individuals saw their roles relative to each other necessitated the use of a qualitative case study. As Yin (2003) asserted, the benefit of a qualitative study is the ability to understand how a certain phenomenon lives within the real-life context (p. 13). The process that was undertaken in the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant at OCC was of interest to this study. The case study ability to monitor the California Career Pathways Trust Fund process effectively shed light into how stakeholders were engaged in this grant (Merriam, 1998). This study was not focused with the generalization of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant, but rather with what Maxwell (2013) suggested as a deeper understanding through the description, interpretation, and explanation of the case at OCC (p. 79). Thus, the use of a qualitative case study drove the methodology of this study and the following research questions:

RQ1: What are the perspectives, attitudes, and lived experiences of students, faculty, and administrators at OCC about their role in the organizational change process relative to the design and development of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant?

RQ2: What are the perspectives, attitudes, and lived experiences of students, faculty, and administrators at OCC about how deeply and effectively they were engaged in decision making relative to implementation of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant?

RQ3: What are the perspectives, attitudes, and lived experiences of students, faculty, and administrators at OCC about the level of engagement and participation of institutional leadership in the design and development of the career path program?

RQ4: What are the perspectives, attitudes, and lived experiences of students, faculty, and administrators at OCC about the outcome of the career path programmatic changes in terms of their preferred objectives?

The outcome of this study contains information with which to inform community college stakeholders about how a career pathway investment was carried out at a community college and contains recommendations about practices that might help advance future investment in career pathways development. This methodology chapter contains a statement of the purpose of the research, the research questions, and a summary of the research design with context to the reasoning behind each component. Additionally, the focus of the study is described, the reasoning for the sample population established, the methods by which data was collected summarized, and the analysis that took place detailed. Lastly, this chapter contains a discussion of the limitations of the study as well as possible considerations of bias with the researcher's background in educational reform efforts.

Sites

The researcher examined the thirty-nine grant sites that received funding through the first round of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant. They included a variety of elementary, secondary and community college districts representing a variety of consortia throughout the state. The consortia collaborations and partnership can be seen in Table 1. The applications for the California Career Pathways Trust Fund included “647 [Local Education Agencies] LEAs, including K-12 schools, adult schools, and charter schools; eighty-five community colleges; and 845 business partners” (California Department of Education, 2017a). Of all of the stakeholders that applied for the California Career Pathways Trust Fund, the majority included business partners, high schools and community colleges. The researcher

investigated the list of partnerships with a focus on community college consortia that were awarded the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant. Community colleges were analyzed by their geography, list of partnerships and accessibility to the researcher. The grants were divided into three tiers, based on grant award, and they included grants that received \$15 million dollars, \$6 million dollars, and \$600,000 dollars.

Table 1	
<i>Consortia Collaborations</i> (California Department of Education, 2019)	
California Career Pathways Trust Fund Application Partners	
<u>Number of Stakeholders</u>	<u>Consortia Stakeholders</u>
167	School Districts
371	High Schools
35	Middle Schools
22	Elementary Schools
22	Adult or Continuation Schools/Community Schools
13	County Office of Education
17	Charter Schools
8	Regional Occupational Center and Programs
85	Community Colleges
845	Business Organizations

The researcher identified that the larger of the grants, at \$15 million, had the most stakeholders and thus would be the most appropriate sites to study. Organizational change and stakeholder engagement area the priority foci of this study, and the consortia with the larger groups would yield greater participation and stakeholder engagement. The \$15 million grants had five community college districts as fiscal agents and two sites were selected as possible study sites based on the proximity to researcher.

The two sites each shared a history of collaboration with local partners, along with commitment to stakeholder engagement as seen by news articles and campus websites. The

primary site was chosen due to personal connections the researcher had with faculty and administrators; however, the institutional research process was delayed and due to the timing of the semester it was difficult to have consistent communication with the grant administrator. The lack of communication resulted in the switching of sites to the second location. Emails soliciting engagement were sent to Vice President of Academic Affairs and the institutional research process was initiated online and responses were immediate and consistent. Once the approval process was approved by the site, an email was sent to the grant administrator to initiate the document review. The grant administrator shared all recorded sign-in sheets for meetings of the grant and the document analysis began. However, not a lot of documentation existed beyond the four years of sign-in sheets and a formative evaluation by an external organization for the first year of programming.

The site was named Oceanside Community College (OCC), a pseudonym being used for the college to protect the confidentiality of site and interviewees. OCC has had a long history of engaging stakeholders and working with local partners in developing career pathway programming with its local secondary partners as well as four-year university partners. Additionally, OCC has been a leader in the field of education because of the region's work in career pathways and its willingness to engage and facilitate partnerships. At over 24,000 students and its location in Southern California, OCC has a majority-minority student population with minority enrollment at 79 percent of the student body (majority Hispanic). The college boasts a large non-traditional student population with a majority of the students attending schools part-time; it is located near robust regional businesses.

Of interest to this study was the fact that OCC has engaged multiple stakeholders in the community by being engaged in career pathway and career academy models through several

years of partnership with its local high school partners, according to local press releases. This continuous engagement is a function of the longevity of both the local K-12 superintendent, and OCC superintendent that collectively served their community a total of 37 years. As Wohlstetter et al. (2003) indicates, “When stakeholders of a school community—the teachers, administrators, staff, parents, students, and community partners—make connections with other schools by sharing ideas, experiences, and strategies, they are able to achieve outcomes not possible when working independently” (p. 402). The engagement with local partners comes from OCC’s unique partnerships with local high schools, and the local California State University. OCC has engaged in strategies that support greater educational integration over the last two decades. This commitment to collaboration and engagement sets OCC apart from other institutions and thus the appropriate site for this study into organizational change and stakeholder engagement.

Sample

As a qualitative case study into the shared and lived experiences of the stakeholders of this California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant, the study required interviews of student leaders, faculty, and administrators at OCC about how deeply and effectively they were engaged in the decision-making process relative to implementation of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant. The original consortia of colleges and high schools included twenty-four local educational agencies that were part of this grant and thus created a large pool of potential participants for this study. However, because OCC was the lead applicant of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund, they were responsible for the stakeholder engagement and the design and implementation of the grant and so they were selected as the primary site for this study. Selection criteria for faculty, administrators, and students was based on individuals who were actively engaged in the design and development of the California Career Pathways Trust

Fund from the years of 2014 to 2018. The selection criteria for student leaders required students to have been enrolled during the grant years as well as having held a student leadership position at any point during the same grant years.

I invited eleven participants through formal invitations to participate in this study. They included three administrators, two of whom wrote the California Career Pathways Trust Fund proposal, four faculty members who were involved in the development of the career pathways, and four students who included three Student Body Presidents and one Student Trustee. The invitation to participate in the study included language indicating that participants were free to participate and that there would be no adverse actions for not participating in the study. I collected descriptive data through the use of semi-structured interviews containing open-ended questions that I administered to participants who were involved in the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant at OCC. In total, I conducted six interviews with two faculty, two administrators, and two students leaders.

One of the original intentions of this study was to document the experience of employers who participated in this grant. As noted in Table 1, out of all of the applications that were submitted for the California Career Pathways Trust Fund, the majority of all stakeholders were 875 separate business organizations. However, when performing the document review, analyzing meeting sign-in sheets, and in the interview process it was observed that employers were an absent stakeholder. Therefore, the decision was made to exclude employers from the study since it was unclear what role they played at OCC, although administrators did note that there were existing relationships with businesses that were leveraged. It is unclear who those businesses were and how they were leveraged.

Administrators

Administrators at high schools and community colleges served as direct overseers of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grants. Since OCC was a chief applicant of a California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant, their administrators were the chief strategists for applying for the grant and in creating the partnerships and meaningful engagements intended to advance the career pathways at OCC. The administrator's perspectives, attitudes, and shared experiences were key to understanding the type of engagement that took place at OCC and through this California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant. For this study, I interviewed two administrators, Administrator 8 and Administrator 18 (pseudonyms independently chosen by administrators). I conducted the interviews in-person (Administrator 18) and over Zoom video webinar (Administrator 8) due to convenience.

Administrator 8 was engaged through the design and implementation of the grant from 2014 through January of 2015. Administrator 8 played multiple roles at the college and indicated that at the time of the grant, they were responsible for writing all grants at the college. Administrator 8 was also part of a grant advisory committee at OCC that included a variety of stakeholders from within the college community. Although the administrator's role in the implementation process was brief (six months), their lived experience through the design process of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund made them a prime candidate for this study.

The second administrator who was part of the interview process was relatively new to the post-secondary education. Although Administrator 18 did have a background in education, their experience was in secondary education. Administrator 18 began their work on the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant in June of 2016 and because of lack of experience, dedicated most of their time to understanding the partnerships and building relationships with stakeholders.

Ultimately, Administrator 18 would be the person responsible for implementation of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund through their tenure at the college. I made numerous attempts to solicit the participation of another administrator that was at OCC during the transition phase from Administrator 8 to Administrator 18, but after several attempts and a lack of engagement I was forced to move forward with the study.

Faculty

Karmon and McGilsky (1997) found that faculty involvement in organizational change was a critical aspect when advancing academic programs. They noted that involving faculty early in the process, especially in developing a mission statement, set the tone for how the faculty could engage in academic planning. Additionally, faculty had to make sacrifices by finding time to meet to work on accomplishing their goals. Cothran and Ennis (1997) concluded that faculty, as expert knowledge givers, affords them certain powers, particularly in the classroom. In community colleges, and because of the shared governance structure of these institutions, faculty have a marked influence over certain decisions at the college about academic planning. Shared governance was a legislative attempt to bring faculty, staff, and students to the decision-making table (Kater, 2017). Faculty continue to be a significant part of the decision-making process and shared governance mandates their engagement.

Faculty engagement in the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grants was key to the development of the career pathways framework. The goal of this grant was to develop a sequence of courses that connected high schools with colleges through academic and career-themed classes, which made faculty involvement of importance to this study. Community college faculty, as expert knowledge givers at a higher education institution, possess great

influence over other stakeholders and partners, and this perspective was crucial to understanding the design and development of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund at OCC.

For this study, four faculty members were sent formal invitations to participate in this study. Two faculty members responded almost immediately for their participation and were included in this study. Several attempts were made to solicit the participation of the remaining two faculty members, but after several attempts were dismissed the researcher made the decision to move on with the study. The two faculty members that did participate in this study, Mike and Mark Smith (pseudonyms chosen independently by each faculty member), were interviewed, one in-person (Mike) and one via Zoom video webinar (Mark Smith).

Faculty member Mike was hired as an adjunct faculty just as the grant implementation was taking place in the fall of 2014 and participated in many meetings early on as a faculty member at a community college. Mike, previous to becoming a faculty member, was an employer in the local community and part of the career pathways in advanced manufacturing. Although Mike was new to the role of a faculty member, he took the opportunity to be part of many committees and meetings related to the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant. Mike has a unique lived experience through this California Career Pathways Trust Fund process and became a fulltime faculty as the grant was ending in 2018.

Faculty member Mark Smith has been with the OCC for longer than the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant but did not become involve with the California Career Pathways Trust Fund until 2016 when he became a fulltime faculty member. Prior to that time Mark Smith was an adjunct faculty in the advanced manufacturing department for four years. While as an adjunct faculty member Mark Smith was a superintendent for a local union and worked nearly thirty years for a local employer.

Students

Several studies in secondary and postsecondary settings have acknowledged that student participation in academic planning is lacking (Bartley et al., 2010; Kennedy & Datnow, 2011). Students, as the prime recipients of the objectives of educational institutions, are the key stakeholders in any educational reform movement. Their perspectives should be included in any endeavor that involves educational reform; however, this is often not the case. At community colleges, students who are older than 25 are close to half of the overall student population at California community colleges (California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, 2018). Community college students hold bachelor's degrees, have professional experience, and most importantly, have lived personal experiences. Their input in an organizational change effort, particularly as it pertains to the efforts that connect to career pathways, is an important viewpoint to understand and explore.

For this study, four student leaders were sent formal invitations to participate in the study. One of the invitations was also sent on behalf of the researcher from one of the student leaders. Out of the four invitations only two students were available for interviews. There were several attempts made to solicit the participation of the two other student leaders but there was no response to emails sent. The decision was made to only interview two students and move forward with the study. Although the students were not directly part of the design, nor the implementation of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund, it was important to understand their perspective of organizational change at OCC while they held the highest student leadership role of Student Body President.

The student leaders interviewed for this study both held the position of Student Body President and were engaged and involved in several college-wide committees and meetings. As

the elected representatives of the student body, the student leaders would have had experience with the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant at OCC. The first student interviewed was Dragon (pseudonym picked by student). Dragon was enrolled during the grant years of 2016 to 2019 and was interviewed during his 2018–2019 term. Additionally, Dragon held a previous student leadership position, Student Body Secretary, during the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant period. Dragon was a sociology major and planned to transfer in 2019. Dragon’s meeting was conducted via Zoom video webinar.

The second student interviewed for this study was Jorge. From 2016 to 2017, Jorge held the position of Student Body President and transferred to the University of California system in 2017. Jorge was enrolled at OCC from 2013 to 2017 and served on several committees as part of his position as Student Body President. Jorge’s meeting was conducted in-person.

Instrumentation

An important piece of qualitative case study process is keeping track of the evolving thoughts and observations of the researcher (Maxwell, 2013, p. 23). The use of a journal allowed the researcher to preserve the ideas and thoughts that helped inform the direction of the case study. The journal also served as an archive of memos and notes that were drafted from the beginning of the data gathering process and through the document review, interviews of stakeholders, and the analysis of the data. Additionally, the journal was used during the document review process to include reflections and personal reactions that helped further develop the researcher’s interpretation of the case study.

Document Review

Document review was the primary tool for this research. A coding tool was designed to categorize whether the documents were part of the design and/or implementation phase of the grant, who the stakeholders were, and at what stage the document had reached in Kotter's eight stages of organizational change. Documents that were created for the purpose of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant at OCC were analyzed and included in the analysis of this study using the Document Review Coding Tool. Administrator 18 shared all appropriate and relevant written records created and those records were used to advance the goal of the grant, shed insight on those goals, and helped triangulate the data that was collected for the purpose of this study. Those documents included meeting sign-in sheets available to the administrators of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant from 2014 to 2018. Additional documentation included two external formative evaluations conducted by external researchers for the first year of the grant. There was a lack of additional documentation available to the researcher, and it was unclear whether the lack of documentation was a result of staff turnover during the grant period or the lack of an archiving process. However, efforts were made to capture the chronology of the documents from the request for proposals to subsequent documents drafted to recruit, market, and support the development and implementation of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant at OCC as well as conduct internet searches on news articles or state reports pertaining to the grant at OCC. The insights gained from the document review process helped inform the questions to all stakeholders. The goal of the document review process was to understand the experience and the level of engagement of the stakeholders in the California Career Pathways Trust Fund at OCC.

Interviews

The interview protocol was guided by the principles identified by the study on human subjects set forth by the National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (1978). National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research holds that there be “fair procedures and outcomes in the selection of subjects” which was the intent and guiding principle of this study and throughout the use of interviews (p. 19). The interview approach was appropriate for this study because it was implemented in a way that ensured consistency across all interviews that were conducted with human subjects. The interviews were focused on the perspectives, attitudes, and lived experiences of students, faculty, administrators through each specific structured research question.

In-depth interviews provided a narrative story into the culture of the site and the phenomenon that the study intended to observe (Seidman, 2006). Seidman observed that interviews deal with the experiences and the meaning that individuals have through those experiences in a particular situation (p. 11). For the purpose of this study, and to be aligned with the theoretical frameworks set forth by Kotter’s eight stages of organizational change, the Actor Network Theory (Law, 1992) and Self Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2000), the focus was on understanding the process of involvement and meaning that each stakeholder group took in the development and implementation of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant. The result of these structured interviews provided greater understanding of the lived experiences, attitudes and perspectives of the participants.

After gathering the initial audio tapes and subsequent transcriptions, it was essential to read and begin the process of analysis through written memos and notes taken during the interview process to gain deeper understanding of how participants answered and behaved during

their interviews. The analysis of written memos and notes eventually led to what Maxwell (2013) described as three possible options of analysis. These options were the (a) memos, that will be included in a journal, (b) categorizing strategies such as coding and thematic analysis, and (c) connecting strategies such as narrative analysis (p. 105). These three levels of analysis were observed throughout this study to further understanding of the perceptions of administrators, faculty and student leaders.

Individuals who confirmed their interest in participating in the study were sent an email thanking them for volunteering for the study, along with next steps of the process, a confidentiality disclaimer, a consent form, and a request to schedule the in-person interview at their convenience (Appendix B). Participants had several options to ensure maximum participation, especially for participants that no longer lived within a convenient distance from the researcher. The request for an in-person interview also included an alternative option for meeting, which was Zoom webinar. Half of the participants chose the Zoom webinar option as it was the most convenient for them.

Once the in-person and Zoom webinar interviews were scheduled and confirmed, participants were made aware that the interviews would be audio recorded, and that a strong commitment to confidentiality would be present. Participants were also told that they were free to cancel their interview at any point in the process. However, they were informed that if the interview was canceled after it had been recorded, certain information captured by the researcher might be used to influence the direction of the study.

To ensure that the data collection procedure was consistent with the research questions of this study, the questions were based on the three-interview process identified by Seidman (2006), which included questions on grant history, details of experience in the California Career

Pathways Trust Fund grant, and reflections on meaning about the engagement of stakeholders (p. 18). The sequence of data collection with interviews began with the project administrator of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant, and then all interviews afterwards were scheduled based on the availability and willingness to participate from the three stakeholder groups identified. The sequence included administrators, students and faculty. Attempts were made to engage other participants in the study by sending emails, but no additional participants responded to the email requests. The interviewed group represented two individuals from each of the three stakeholder groups and constituted the representative sample needed for this qualitative case study.

Procedure

The procedure began with the submittal of an application for permission to conduct the research, including the first three chapters of the study, to the Institutional Review Board of California State University, Northridge (CSUN). Upon receiving approval of the IRB application from CSUN, an email was sent to the leadership of the first college identified as a possible sample for this study. Over the course of several emails and months, administrators of the first community college were not responsive and did not show an interest in participating in this study. The second community college identified as a potential source of data was OCC. An email was sent to administrators inviting them to participate in the study and the college became the prime subject for this study because of its deep involvement in pathways programs. Additionally, the researcher communicated with the Vice President of Academic Affairs to obtain access to stakeholder groups that participated of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant during the years from 2014 to 2018. The Vice President connected the researcher to the Institutional Research Office at OCC, which had an internet-based application for submitting

research request. The researcher submitted all required information and waited to be connected to the grant administrator over the California Career Pathways Trust Fund. Follow up communication asking for participation in the study was sent to the Institutional Research Office and the connection to Administrator 18 (pseudonym) was made after several follow up attempts.

Email communications ensued with the point of contact, which was the project administrator at OCC. The administrator set up a time to meet and gave access to documentation created during the course of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant through a secure and password protected online server. The process included a chronological overview of all documents to identify any patterns or themes in the document review. One of the principal observations from the document review was the fact that no businesses were part of the meetings that were organized by OCC. This was observed through the sign-in sheets that were kept from 2016 to 2018. Additionally, it was observed that there were missing documents detailing the engagement of stakeholders and the connection to an organizational change framework from OCC.

It was of the utmost importance to the researcher that all documents reviewed were authentic and accurate for the inclusion of this study. To confirm the authenticity of the findings, the researcher sent emails to the grant administrator to verify the information on business engagement, and indeed, businesses were not part of the meetings that were organized by the college. Although employer participation through the grant application was high for all applications received by the state, it was not clear from the documents reviewed who the employers were that partnered with OCC and what their level of engagement was in the process. Therefore, the decision was made to exclude employers from this study since their participation was not part of the design and development of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant

at OCC and relationships to employers who submitted their support for the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant was not available.

Through the document review process, Administrator 18 provided emails of some of the faculty who were engaged in the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant. Emails were sent to faculty soliciting their participation. Additionally, Administrator 18 provided the names of the administrators that held the grant administrator positions at OCC at the design phase of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund. The researcher searched the internet for contact information of the administrators and was able to locate and submit emails to both administrators. Only one administrator from the group agreed to participate in the study. Once participants agreed to participate, a signed consent form was collected from each participant and forms were stored in a folder inside of a locked drawer at the researcher's home.

Interview times were coordinated, and once interviews were conducted, the researcher once again informed the participants of their rights. As part of the first phase of the interview process, pseudonyms were recorded by the researcher and demographic information was compiled in the researcher journal (Table 2). Demographic information regarding age, years of service, race and ethnicity was collected from each participant. The interviews were recorded using a handheld Olympus Voice Recorder WS-853. Audio files were uploaded to rev.com and transcribed with corresponding timestamps. After all, identifying information was deleted from each transcription the audio recordings were successfully deleted.

Two laptops were used for this study. All literature review information, dissertation drafts, and analysis were kept, on laptop 1. Laptop 2 contained all transcript data, and identifying information, which was deleted and changed to pseudonyms before being imported onto Laptop 1 with no identifying information. Participants chose a pseudonym that best suited

their personalities. Each person’s interview was conducted on a one-on-one basis. Some interesting observations occurred as Administrators each chose a number to describe themselves, faculty chose names that started with the letter M, and the students chose “Dragon” and “Jorge” to best describe themselves.

Table 2					
<i>Demographic Analysis Information</i>					
Participant	Stakeholder group	Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Years involved
1	Administrator	8	Female	42	2014 – 2015
2	Administrator	18	Female	40	2016 – 2018
3	Faculty	Mike	Male	37	2014 – 2018
4	Faculty	Mark Smith	Male	53	2016 – 2018
5	Student	Dragon	Male	23	2017– 2018
6	Student	Jorge	Male	25	2013– 2017

Analysis of Data

As Maxwell (2013) indicated, “Most qualitative texts and published articles deal explicitly only with coding” without fully examining the different forms of analysis including memos and the connections between the data collected (p. 105). It was important for the researcher to utilize the full scope of tools available, such as the researcher’s journal, memos during interviews, documentation and literature review through the data collection process. Additionally, the researcher accessed legislative data to trace the development of the career pathways and organizational development framework.

The analysis began with the transcription of each interview beginning with the administrators and ending with the student interviews. A transcription computer software, Nvivo 12 was used to code the transcripts of each interview. The coding utilized corresponded with Kotter’s eight stages to organizational change and Self-Determination Theory. The codes used are included in Table 3. Kotter’s stages served as the coding and they included: (a) creating a sense of urgency, (b) creating a guiding coalition, (c) developing a vision and strategy, (d) communicating the change vision, (e) empowering broad-based action, (f) generating short-term wins, (g) consolidating gains and producing more change, and (h) anchoring new approaches into the culture. Addition codes included “new experience”, “staff capacity”, “self-determination theory” and “stakeholder engagement” were additional codes created due to the frequency of their mention with stakeholders.

Table 3	
<i>Code Formulation</i>	
Stakeholder Engagement	
<u>Number</u>	<u>Code</u>
1	Gains+More Change
2	Empowering Employees-Broad Base
3	New Experience
4	Self Determination Theory
5	Sense of Urgency
6	Stakeholder Engagement
7	Guiding Coalition
8	Staff Capacity
9	Anchoring in Culture
10	Communicating Change Vision
11	Developing Vision-Strategy
12	Celebrating Short-Term Wins

The transcriptions of the interviews followed the sequence stated previously. The researcher began by identifying the areas of interest in each interview and began to take notes and create entries into the case study journal as items were mentioned or researcher thought of the data connections. The researcher captured the pseudonym chosen by the subject, time, location, and other demographic information, which made it easier for the researcher to reference each transcription. Based on the transcription, the researcher began to identify themes and create categories for data that related to each research question. Additionally, the researcher created memos to help me keep track of data of interest and to follow up and reference that information for future analysis.

Lastly, thematic connections such as staff turnover and the lack of documents were identified, and those connections were further associated with stakeholders and outcomes of the grant, all based on data that was gathered through the interview transcriptions. The researcher

developed the aforementioned strategies from the data that I acquired through the interviews and gathered from documents. In summary, all data that I collected through documentation, audio recording, journals, and memos served as inputs in the data analysis that became the final product of this study.

Ethical Considerations

As an active policy and programmatic advocate of educational reform efforts in California, the researcher has been involved in the development of career pathway models throughout the state and at the federal level. Starting in 2009, the researcher began to work directly with nonprofits implementing innovative career pathways programs across the United States. Through a decade of direct policy and programmatic experience the researcher has observed a variety of program models and most of the stakeholder engagement of those program models was confirmed through the literature review process. Acknowledgement of this direct connection in career pathway modeling helped the researcher recognize bias that might have existed between past connections to career pathways and the organizational change initiative at OCC. Bias was mitigated by a strict focus on the documents that were created to advance the outcomes of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant and a commitment to representing the unique lived experiences of each participant interviewed. An objective view of these documents and the participants interviewed assisted in understanding the steps taken to engage stakeholders in the grant.

Delimitations are factors that define the specific scope of the study (Creswell, 2015; Muijs, 2011). I conducted the study in the state of California. I selected participants in 2018 from students, faculty, and administrators at OCC. It is important to note that the most significant delimitation to the study was the lack of employer engagement. Although the

literature review and document review acknowledged employers as important stakeholders in career pathways, employers were not present in the document review and subsequent interviews acknowledged employers lack of participation in the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant at OCC. As a result of this lack of participation, employers were excluded from the study. Furthermore, it was observed and later confirmed through interviews, that students did not play a role in the design or development of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant. Even though the students' participation was lacking, since I was able to attain interview commitments from student leaders, they were included in the scope of this study and their participation provided valuable insight into stakeholder engagement. Lastly, this study represents a "local hub," which was part of a larger consortia of colleges, high schools, and community organizations that were engaged in the design and implementation of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant at OCC. The findings from this study are specific to this local hub and cannot be attributed to the larger consortia or to the field of California community colleges.

In total, three stakeholder groups were part of this study and they included six participants from each of the three stakeholder groups identified. Results of interviews and a review of documents constituted the body of evidence that was analyzed.

Validity

The purpose of this study was to understand from participants in the pathways grant what their perspectives, attitudes, and lived experiences were through the design, development, and implementation of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund at OCC. The interview method was the most appropriate tool for understanding the relationships that existed and the perceptions that were present during the years 2014–2018 at OCC with the three active stakeholder groups.

The questions for this study were designed to uncover in-depth information about the overarching research questions of stakeholder engagement driving the need for the study.

Summary

The methodology set forth in this chapter outlined the processes and procedures that were best suited to answer the research questions. I selected qualitative case study as the primary approach because of the ability it held to understand the perspectives, attitudes, and lived experiences of the stakeholders in California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant. The reason for choosing the study site, the sample that was researched, and methods for collecting data were all suitable for the research questions that were identified. Finally, the process for conducting data collection and analysis of that data was explained. Other considerations of the study were outlined, all of which were intended to provide greater insight into the gaps in research and literature that currently exist in the stakeholder engagement of community college partners undergoing organizational change initiatives focused on career pathways models.

Chapter 4: Research Findings

This study focused on understanding how a community college undergoes organizational change and the stages that are used to manage the engagement of stakeholders through that process. Interviews on the perspectives of stakeholder groups as they engaged through this organizational change process were the primary tool used to understand this process. The problem statement underscored the lack of research on organizational change at community colleges and the role of stakeholders in that process. Kotter's eight stages of organizational change provided a framework to understand the elements of an organizational change process that were adopted through the California Career Pathways Trust Fund at Oceanside Community College (OCC). Kotter's stages includes: (a) creating a sense of urgency, (b) creating a guiding coalition, (c) developing a vision and strategy, (d) communicating the change vision, (e) empowering broad-based action, (f) generating short-term wins, (g) consolidating gains and producing more change, and (h) anchoring new approaches into the culture.

Kotter's eight stages of organizational change describes the series of stages that must take place for an organizational change process to be successful. The initial finding at OCC was that there were missing stages in the organizational change framework to advance the grant. Some of the missing stages, according to interviews, was the inconsistency of a guiding coalition, lack of a clear vision, communicating the change vision, and generating short-term wins. However, even with the lack of some of the organizational change stages, the grant was successful, and the outcomes were met. By utilizing Actor Network Theory, the researcher began to identify other possible actors that might explain how it was possible to lack organizational change stages and still successfully meet grant outcomes. Through this discovery the researcher identified that

there were several other state and federal grants and initiatives concurrently operating within OCC and their consortia partners that also supported career pathways changes (see Figure 1).

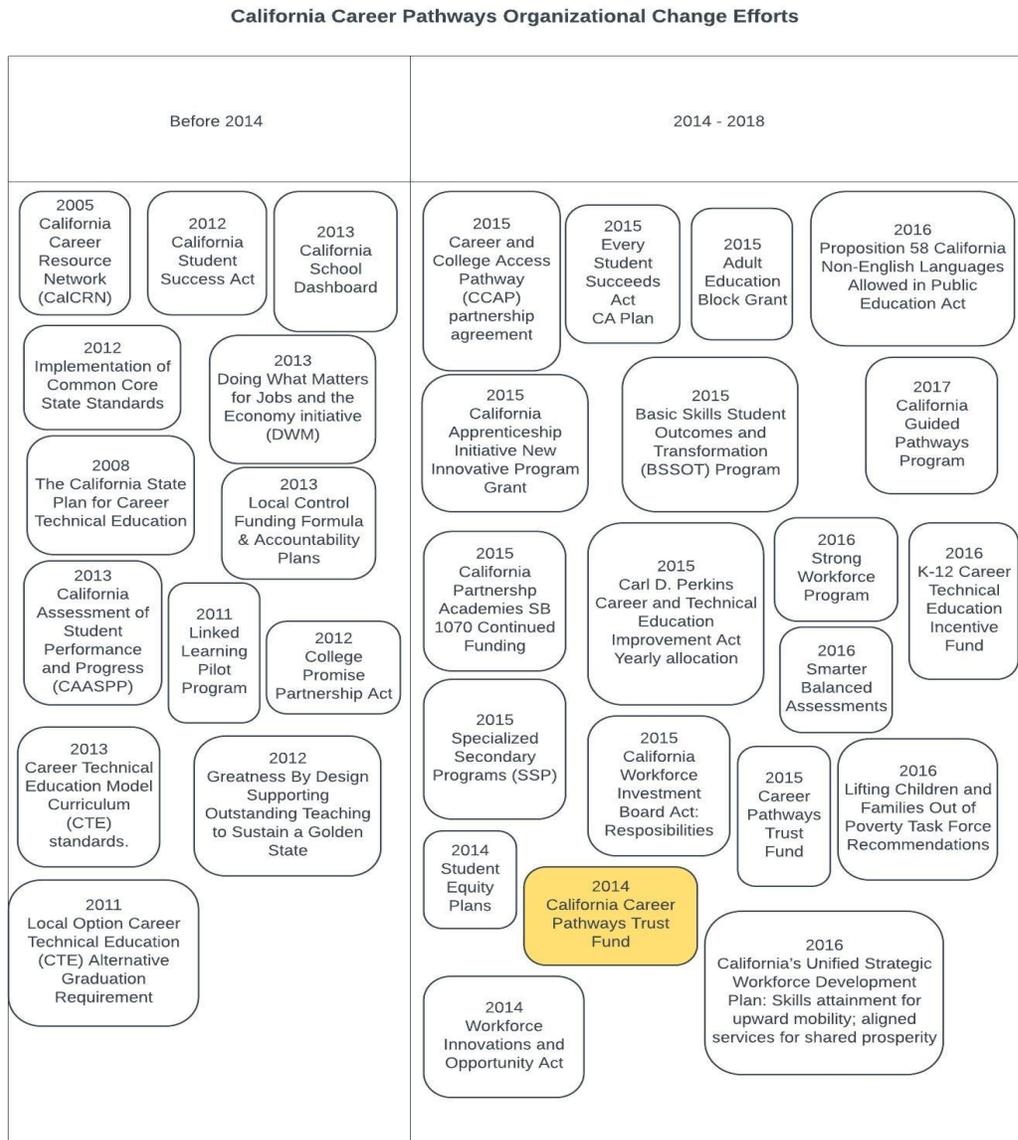


Figure 1. California Career Pathways Organizational Change Efforts.

The researcher discovered that there were several state and federal initiatives that supported the development of career pathways at California high schools and community colleges during the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grants years of 2014 to 2018 as well

as years prior (California Legislative Information, 2019). These grants and laws all carried orders focused on integration and collaboration between educational systems along with employers and other workforce development agencies for the advancement of career pathways programs. It is unclear whether these grants adhered to any organizational change stages, or how they connected to the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant, but according to Administrator 8:

[The California Career Pathways Trust Fund] was consistent with how we had been structuring grant development across the campus, for a number of years. So, while there was funding available through different grants, we always talked about, we write the plan and then we fund the plan. And so, depending on where we were in terms of aspirations [and] goals, implementation across the campus for the reforms we were trying to map funding to those priority areas, not chase dollars, if you will. I think the messaging around the California Career Pathways Trust Fund funding was very similar approach Everything we put into grants at that point in time, had to also be in department plans. It wasn't about chasing dollars, it was about advancing the work that folks had identified as priority for their department.

What is important to note from Administrator 8's comment is that there was an internal framework with pursuing of this grants. However, it is unclear what the components of the framework was and how it helped move the California Career Pathways Trust Fund objectives. Even though these additional grants and initiatives were beyond the scope of this study, it can be inferred that they played a role as an actor in the success of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund outcomes. Although the researcher is only able to infer a connection based on the comments by Administrator 8 and the language of each individual reform effort it was important

for this study to discover what the organizational change process that was used to advance the California Career Pathways Trust Fund and how stakeholders were engaged through that process.

Student Engagement

At the opposite end of stakeholder engagement was the experience that students encountered through this grant. As Administrator 8 honestly expressed, “No student leadership [was engaged]’ I’ll name that. That one is sort of easy and sad to name.” Students were not present in any of the document review, and student leaders, in particular, were not engaged in the design or development of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant at OCC. As one of the two students interviewed for this study, Dragon stated, “There’s a lot of things so far that we’re not in the loop of.” Dragon also noted, “I just feel that, as a student leader, I didn’t know my rights.” And the second student, Jorge, accurately stated, “the decisions were made by the administrators.” These comments speak to the lack of engagement from the administrators to include the student leaders, but it also speaks to a desire from the student leaders to know more about what is going on in their campuses.

Although the student leaders, as elected representatives of the student body, understood that they were not engaged in the design and development of the grant, they did have rich feedback on their experiences as student leaders through an organizational change process. When asked about what the student leaders remember about the California Career Pathways Trust Fund, Dragon reflected that, “The thing I remember is they had a career fair, and I remember an engineering day.” The second student, Jorge, remembered, “I think I first heard it in one of the meetings because I served on different little committees within OCC, while I was Associated Student Body President. And still to this day, I don’t know exactly what it means for

sure, but I've heard the [California Career Pathways Trust Fund] term being thrown around a couple times." Consistently the students expressed ideas that might have proven helpful in the implementation of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund. However, due to the lack of participation in the design and development of this grant the students ideas did not get implemented.

What was observed from the student interviews was that there was a clear lack of meaningful engagement and consistent communication from the guiding coalition. Jorge stated:

We would have people from the Career Pathways come in specifically into our meetings, and kind of explain what the vision was behind it. And I know they also went into other meetings, which I was a part of, that included faculty and staff. But for the most part, I think that was it. There wasn't outreach to the student body in general as a whole, to try and explain what it was.

From the students' perspective there was some communication around this grant, but not enough for them to understand nor for them to share with their constituents. Students perspectives and experiences are important to academic institutions, and there are examples of engagement efforts; however, as Kennedy and Datnow (2011) suggest, "Students were seldom asked directly" (p. 1264). Kennedy and Datnow assert the type of engagement that took place at OCC was that they identify as in Tier 3, "Rather than questioning the reform itself, or being directly involved in the reform efforts, students were asked to respond to the data that were a product of those reform efforts" (p. 1261). This shows that students consistently are left out of the design and implementation of organizational change efforts, and only thought as evaluators of whether a change effort was successful.

The student interviews revealed that student leaders were somewhat aware of what was going on with the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant because they would get information from other students, in passing, or through shared governance meetings that were open to student leaders. Dragon remembers hearing something related to the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant and programs that were shut down previously:

I think last year they were trying to restructure and bring some programs back and maybe through the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant, I think that's how they utilize it. Because right now, Career Technical Education programs, it's like the hot thing right now. So, I heard like engineering, nursing, which is now part of our Career Technical Education program, and they were like the most talked about programs. And they were bringing back some other programs from under their program just like welding and electrician or something like that.

Again, there was information about the grant being presented around the college, but no clear communication strategy designed for the consumption of the student leaders. The students took the initiative to try and find out what was taking place at the campus, and at times that information was stumbled upon, and other times it was fellow students who would share interesting tidbits from committees they were engaged in. Jorge recalled:

My friend, he was the one that mainly kept us informed on it, because he would sit in on some of those meetings. And he would come in, he would say, "This is what they're trying to do, this is how they're trying to accomplish it, feel free to come out to this. Feel free to tell your friends about this."

From Jorge's comments we see that communication trickled down to the student leaders, but it was done so in piecemeal and not in a consistent and meaningful way. This lack of a

constant communication stream was also apparent throughout the grant activities. Although both student leaders served in the same position of Student Body President for their respective terms, they were engaged in distinct discussions. Dragon had to go out and search for the information because his curiosity led him to that. “I used my secretary skills and my investigation skills.” Jorge depended on the Student Trustee to relay information: “Like I said, my friend, he was the one that mainly kept us informed on it.” As the grant progressed only a few students were kept informed of the process, although it is unclear what details the students actually knew.

Through the interview process students expressed appreciation for the work being promoted and advanced through the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant. Dragon shared his enthusiasm about how much more connected students felt between Career Technical Education programs and the traditional social science and math programs at the main campus. “So, if the grant for the California Career Pathways Trust Fund I know it's for the Career Technical Education programs and because of the popularity of the programs I feel that the Career Technical Education students are at the same level as the main campus now.” Jorge stated, “It just seemed like it was more organized and more ready to go; they prepared students quicker and faster to get out.” Again, the students expressed the importance they saw in regard to these career pathways investment, but the information was limited to hearsay and not thorough.

Although students were not engaged in the design and development of this grant, they did have valuable points to make, one of which was brought up by Dragon, who pondered:

So how about the other departments, you know? So, I don't . . . honest like I'm graduating. I don't know if like psychology and sociology major. I don't know if it's amazing, so just because my major is very competitive. Even though I graduate with my bachelor's I'm not going to get a job immediately compared to people who are in the part

of the Career Technical Education program. I just feel like there must be some type of support. I wish we had more industry partners that helps the other programs, not only the Career Technical Education program. It's just because they have tremendous effort to put it back, but it doesn't happen . . . not everyone's going to be served but I just feel like, you know, we have to try.

From Dragon's perspective, other programs also needed to be included in the activities that he saw happening with the Career Technical Education programs. It is unclear how students could have been involved or what supports they might have needed to engage in this effort, but what is clear is that students had ideas for design elements for the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant.

Administrator Engagement

Two administrators were identified as subjects. Their perspectives were varied, but one consistent message emerged, which was the significance that administrator turnover had on the communication of a common and consistent vision throughout the grant period.

Organizational change has been researched in academia, and phenomena have been explored, but there is no clear framework for adopting organizational change at a California community college undergoing career pathway remodeling (Bailey et al., 2015; Harbour & Wolgemuth, 2015; Martinez & McGrath, 2014; McGaughy & Venezia, 2018; Rodicio et al., 2014). Kotter's (2012) eight stages in organizational change was used as a lens to view the career pathways changes that took place at OCC. Although, Kotter's eight stages were primarily observed in private sector organizational change initiatives, the principles outlined by the framework provided guidance from which to view the change that took place at OCC.

Faculty Engagement

Faculty were engaged through the beginning of the grant, and the academic senate of OCC was part of the grant advisory committee that was involved in the proposal writing of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund. As Administrator 8 stated, “We also had internal working committee with the department faculty that were responsible for moving the pathways forward.” Administrator 18 also reflected on the fact that having faculty involvement “definitely helped in developing the processes...working with faculty and developing those relationships [made them] more interested now in developing articulation agreement in offering dual enrollment and even work-based learning. Some of the main components of the grant...have been streamlined so it's easier to implement now.” Because of their constant engagement, this made faculty active participants and active decision makers of the grant.

Faculty played a role throughout the process of the grant; however, it is not clear if faculty that were part of the grant advisory committee were also part of the implementation of the grant. As Mark Smith stated, “the college had already been awarded [the California Career Pathways Trust Fund] . . . we were collectively figuring out where to best apply the money for the most benefit. The way it was presented to me was that it was to enhance and support the advanced manufacturing programs within the college.” Nonetheless, by having faculty engaged in the grant planning and grant writing process through the grant advisory committee, faculty had a direct role in understanding the goals of the grant and were able to drive the outcomes of the grant around dual enrollment and curricular articulation agreements.

Paradigm Shift

A finding of this research was the significant shift that the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant had in creating a new system for community colleges. The intention of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant was to:

. . . provide for the establishment or expansion of career pathways in grades nine through fourteen that integrate standards-based academics with a sequenced, career-relevant curriculum following industry-themed pathways that are aligned with high-need, high-growth, or emerging regional economic sectors. (California Department of Education, 2017a)

The vision of this grant meant that community colleges and high schools were to partner, collaborate, and integrate their programming in an intentional and meaningful way. As Administrator 8 noted, “It spoke loudly to me that it was a system change effort.” Administrator 8 went on to state that although they understood the purpose, it was new for the college, but conversely . . . the K-12 [system] had more of a culture or history of working together . . . it is just more familiar for the K-12 than it is for the community colleges.” Administrator 8’s comments speak to the fact that colleges have not had a culture of partnering others, and that the California Career Pathways Trust Fund really provided that opportunity to initiate this engagement. This created the paradigm shift that drove the outcomes of the grant. As the college and its consortia partners understood the larger purpose ahead and they apparently were able to advance the outcomes of the grant even as the college experienced immense staff turnover.

It was clear that the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant was not the only change effort taking place at OCC. Research was conducted to identify similar educational reform efforts that were underway during the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant period of 2014 to 2018, and those state efforts were put into two categories, those efforts that were created during the 2014 to 2018 years and those prior to 2014, which can be viewed in Figure 1. These educational reform efforts seemed to help advance the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant goals, although it is unclear how these efforts directly connected to

the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant. Regardless of their direct link to the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant, the Administrators and Faculty both referenced aspects of some of these additional educational reform efforts, and directly referenced the Strong Workforce Program and Dual Enrollment efforts at the state level to support career pathways at OCC.

Kotter's Eight Stages of Organizational Change

By using Kotter's eight stages of organizational change the researcher was able to apply this framework to discover what stages of the organizational change process were present through the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant at OCC. One of main stages of this process is the engagement of a guiding coalition to advance components of the organizational change. This guiding coalition is meant to be the consistent body that advances the goals of the organizational change process. One of the major challenges of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant at OCC was the staff turnover that took place from 2014 to 2018 at OCC. As shown in Table 2, there was only one person, Mark Smith, who was engaged from the beginning of the grant through to its completion. Mark Smith described one of the first things he remembered from 2014:

I was invited to a meeting, to assist with, I guess the [guiding coalition]—I don't know. I don't know if I want to say guiding or not, but, when I was invited to the meeting, the college had already been awarded [the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant], and we were collectively figuring out where to best apply the money for the most benefit.

The changes in administration and the lack of a framework that new administrators could reference created lapses in the management of the grant. However, by the end of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant project in 2018, Mark Smith reflected, "Absolutely, I was

very satisfied and I worked 29 years in private industry before I started teaching full-time, and this is the funnest job I've ever had." Mark Smith's reactions are consistent with the findings of this grant, and it shows that although several stages in organizational change were missing, the grant produced the intended outcomes and those involved were satisfied with the work they had accomplished. To further understand the stages that were missing the section below covers each stage and its relevance to the organizational change process at OCC.

Stage One: Establishing a Sense of Urgency

Since a sense of urgency was the first step of Kotter's stages, it was present in the interview protocols and interviews affirmed its significance at OCC; however, the same urgency was not shared by all interviewees. Administrators were driven by extrinsic motivators acknowledging the amount of the grant and the fact that they were looked upon as models for their region and the state. Faculty were driven by a sense of survival. As Mike explained, "We had discontinued 11 programs . . . that kind of affected a lot of the morale, I think, in our area . . . manufacturing and technology within the state, at least at the community college level, had been stagnant for a long time, so our programs had been stagnant, and the sooner we could get some of these dollars invested into the program, the better our program would be." This comment spoke to the fact that the California Career Pathways Trust Fund created a lifeline for programs to revamp, update, and once again provide needed and relevant courses for college students. The urgency for faculty was to use the funding to once again compete to attract students; otherwise, as Mike noted, "When times are tough, you're not going to get anything."

Additionally, administrators felt a different sense of urgency, Administrator 8 in the beginning of the grant felt, "an anxiety around getting it right and making it meaningful. And that everyone was watching." The California Career Pathways Trust Fund provided a significant

change in the ways the community colleges engaged with their local high school partners. This new organizational change effort asked a lot out of these partnerships and the urgency was definitely felt. As Administrator 18 noted a couple of years into the grant, “I think some things took longer than expected so there was that sense of like, we need to get this done because we planned this out two years ago and some stuff had not been closed out yet or had not really progressed. There was just that sense of wanting to finish what was laid out at the very beginning. There was a regional articulation agreement that folks had started at that point and had not been completed yet, so people really wanted to see that happen. A lot went into that and I think it was a little more challenging than expected—when you are collaborating with different colleges, everyone has different processes in place. But in the end, we were able to do that. It just took longer than planned.” Certainly, the sense of urgency was present among the administrators and this stage was present in this organizational change effort.

This stage in the process—urgency—was clearly present for all stakeholders involved in the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant. However, the urgency was understood and interpreted differently for both faculty and administrators. Since staff turnover, among administrators, played a role in this grant, it is unclear if the sense of urgency was communicated differently from the beginning of the grant, through its design and into the implementation phase.

Stage Two: Creating a Guiding Coalition

Creating a guiding coalition, which is a group of members with organizational authority that can carry the change process from inception to completion, requires the participation of a “powerful force” that can sustain the process while also understanding the difficulty of the change that the organizational guiding coalition is undertaking (Kotter, 2012, p. 53). This guiding coalition requires the recruitment of the “right” individuals that share a certain level of

trust, but also a sense of purpose and objective. Individuals in this guiding coalition should possess certain traits such as coming from a position of power, holding necessary expertise, established credibility and proven leadership skills. Although most of these characteristics are ideal, the reality is that at OCC the guiding coalition had been established early on, but it quickly went away as administrator turnover occurred.

One of the requirements of a guiding coalition is the trust that must exist among all of the individuals involved. This California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant pushed the boundaries, literally and figuratively, for the project administrators at the college. As Administrator 8 experienced at the beginning of the grant, “I had strong relationships with Deans and some of the leads for the K-12s . . . for others, [those relationships] were brand new . . . so I had done a lot of work to try to build trust.” Administrator 8 knew that trust was key to moving the outcomes of the grant, because it required so much integration and collaboration among the consortia members. As the grant progressed and turnover began to impact the lead college and administrators, the guiding coalition began to stop meeting. Administrator 18, who joined the team two years into the project, acknowledged that, “Initially the structure that was set up was very strong” although the guiding coalition was composed of “mostly Deans and Coordinators.” The lack of a clear guiding coalition, and the fact that the coalition was composed of mostly administrators did not allow for this step to be fully realized in the organizational process.

The guiding coalition OCC was complicated by the fact that each of the five partner schools had its own institutional and departmental priorities and goals associated with the grant. The guiding coalition at OCC was meeting on a regular basis, but it did not have all the decision makers it needed. The guiding coalition did move forward with establishing the structure for the short-term wins that would move the grant forward. With staff turnover, a myriad of competing

priorities, and the fact that the guiding coalition did not have dedicated time to commit to this effort, it lost steam since it did not have the “powerful people” needed for sustainability (Kotter, 1996, p. 54).

This stage in the process was not consistent and at times not present in the organizational change process. The implications of this missing step are that communications were inconsistent, not all stakeholders were aware of the activities, and the vision and sense of urgency did not have consistent messengers. Although the guiding coalition was a key stage in Kotter’s eight stages, this inconsistency did not hinder the outcomes of this grant.

Stage Three: Developing a Vision and Strategy

Developing a vision and strategy “is a central component of all great leadership” (Kotter, 2012, p. 70). A vision provides implicit and explicit direction as to why individuals should strive to create a common future. A vision and strategy help to clarify direction, motivates people to act, and helps coordinate those actions for the common vision. Vision helps clarify the creation of strategies, but also helps to remove conflicting initiatives or actions.

The California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant required a local consortia of community colleges, which included five colleges with their own boards of trustees, their own presidents, vice presidents, deans, department chairs, faculty leads, faculty, employer advisories, student leaders, and students to come up with their own strategies for accomplishing this “system change effort,” according to Administrator 8. As faculty member Mike acknowledged, “Not everyone [knew] what the original mission was.” This confusion in the mission made it difficult for everyone to have the same message about the grant. It is unclear how this affected the grant, since the objectives of the goals were met. However, it was clear that the faculty member was not clear on the original mission of the grant. As Kotter (1996) noted, “Vision refers to a picture

of the future with some implicit or explicit commentary on why people should strive to create that future” (p. 68). An underlying assumption to Kotter’s framework is the need for continuity among the change agents.

OCC went through unprecedented change through the course of this grant. The staff turnover was acknowledged by all participants of this study. Administrator 18 noted there was “quite a bit of transition at all levels,” and Administrator 8 further detailed this phenomenon by acknowledging individual turnover from “Dean of Counseling, our Career Technical Education Dean, our Student Support Services Dean . . . our VP of Academic Affairs.” Eventually, the College President, Vice President of Student Services, and the original Project Administrator, Administrator 8, all transitioned away from the institution within the first two years of the grant announcement. Faculty member Mark Smith noted, “There was so much personnel turnover, it’s hard to say what would be a change related to the grant and what was just new people, new ideas.” Mike also acknowledged, “Been here four years going on five, and I’ve had five different deans. So, leadership has changed five different times, and within that, the vision has changed.” The lack of consistency among administrators created uncertainty with other stakeholders. As faculty understood, with new administrators comes new ideas and perhaps changes to existing activities.

Kotter (1996) acknowledged that if “. . . you leave one of the Stages in the eight-stage change process without finishing the work, you usually pay a big price later on” (p. 83). This sentiment was reiterated by Mike: “So that’s one of the issues that I think has come across. Not everyone knows what the original mission was and how to actually carry it forward.” Change is a difficult task to accomplish; creating change in a system and network of community colleges is a Herculean task and having inconsistencies in the mission because of the staff turnover made it

that more difficult for this consortium of colleges. This stage in the organizational change process was not present and inconsistent at best.

Stage Four: Communicating the Change Vision

Communicating the change vision is creating a common understanding among all those involved in the organizational change initiative for a common direction and goal. For certain staff, particularly managers, this common understanding might be difficult because of their limited scope as transactional leaders. To truly have a transformational vision...requires those on the guiding coalition to spend a few hundred hours collecting information, digesting, considering alternatives, and eventually making choices” (Kotter, 2012, p. 89). At OCC, there was a certain level of “sensemaking” (Kezar, 2001) that took place because the lack of a clear and stable vision throughout the course of the grant period. The sensemaking was staff interpreting their world and reconstructing their reality by the absence of a clear and consistent vision (p. 47).

Kotter (1998) indicates, “In more successful transformation efforts, executives use all existing communication channels to broadcast the vision” (p. 13). At OCC, staff used communication channels, which included emails, webinars, and in-person meetings. Faculty member Mark Smith noted that they “. . . shared news, basically via email and then twice-a-month meetings.” Administrators created a communication sub-committee to attempt to share a consistent message across the consortium of colleges, but there was no indication in the data of whether the sub-committee met and what products were produced. From the faculty and students, it was apparent that they did not receive much communication about the grant. Faculty member Mike noted that he did not “. . . remember ever having a formalized structure” for communication. The lack of communication meant that the college community and the larger consortia was not receiving the same message. It is unclear what specific challenges this created

since the goals of the grant were met. As a result, this stage in the organizational change process was lacking and inconsistent. Faculty and administrators managed a variety of email lists that they would communicate through, but it was not as consistent as Kotter's stages suggest it should be in order to be effective.

Stage Five: Empowering Employees for Broad-Based Action

Empowering broad-based action requires the careful analysis of the barriers that can and will impede change, providing training required to bring organizational change agents to the same level of understanding, and lastly the ability to align existing systems that support the vision that create broad-based action (Kotter, 2012, p. 106). There is a need to identify the “. . . new behaviors, skills and attitudes” that will be needed for organizational change to occur (Kotter, 1996, p. 108). This was made clear by faculty member Mike, who directly stated that “. . . not everyone [knew] what the original mission was and how to actually carry it forward. That was hard, especially since I was probationary, I didn't have much pull or say about where the vision should really go.” Mike did not feel he was empowered to make decisions, and the uncertainty due to staff turnover did not provide the opportunities for staff to feel empower to move the mission forward. Additionally, because Mike was not part of the original guiding coalition, he lacked the empowerment to make decisions on behalf of the grant.

Although it was clear that employees did not feel empowered to advance the grant. As far as providing the training specific to this grant, Mark Smith put it simply, “I did not receive any training specific to the grant.” Empowerment of staff was perceived differently by faculty, where empowerment meant that funding was available to purchase equipment. As Faculty Mike noted, “I think the metal fabrication area felt more empowered. Out of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant they [purchased] these huge machines, which is unlike anything most

community colleges have. One of the drawbacks was that I don't recall it being a part of the original vision." This confusion was due to the lack of communication and the fact that not everyone was part of the guiding coalition and did not know what the original mission and activities were from the beginning.

Seeing the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant at OCC through Kotter's eight stages of organizational change framework offered insight into some of the challenges that took place at the college, but there was also inconsistency in how this framework conflicted with the cultures and structures of academia, particularly at a OCC. The complexity of this grant also made it difficult for all five colleges to be on the same message of what staff empowerment meant for their respective efforts. This stage in the organizational change process was missing and it was unclear how grant administrators empowered staff to further the components of the grant, although the grant was ultimately successful.

Stage Six: Generating Short-Term Wins

Generating short-term wins is about planning short-term results that are aligned to the overall organizational change strategy but that can be seen by all involved and not involved in change. As Kotter explained, the short-term wins must be visible, unambiguous, and clearly related to the overall organizational change effort (Kotter, 2012, p. 126). At OCC, because of the need to de-centralize the process, the wins were ambiguous and only visible to those individuals involved in that particular effort.

As Administrator 8 noted, "There was work that was happening across all of the partnerships, and then work that was happening specific to organizations." This work included regional articulation agreements between colleges, coordination of dual enrollment courses between high schools, full adoption of Project Lead The Way, an experiential learning

curriculum, and coordinated work-based learning activities through industry intermediary organizations. Although these short-term wins were acknowledged by the administrators and faculty, it was clear through the interviews that this information was not shared in a broad way with the rest of the campus community.

For faculty the wins came from seeing the new equipment, as Mark Smith observed, “the technology upgrade in the metal fabrication shop took us from the 1950s to basically present-day.” This stage of the organizational change process was celebrated through smaller groups, and not communicated throughout the entire network. The implication of this stage is that for the organizational change to take place stakeholders must know that changes that are happening are a result of the initiative. If that is not communicated, then the changes can be perceived to be result of other factors.

Stage Seven: Consolidating Gains and Producing More Change

Consolidating gains and producing more change argues that organizational change cannot be celebrated until equilibrium is achieved and until the change has been imbedded into organizational culture. The interconnections and inter-dependability of organizations must also be acknowledged and built into the overall organizational change vision and strategy. The interconnections of organizations mean that you can rarely move just one element by itself to achieve organizational change (Kotter, 2012, p. 142). Since short-term wins were not clearly communicated, it was difficult to observe how OCC faculty and administrators to consolidate gains and produced more change.

It was clear to faculty that the career pathways movement had reached many areas of the college, as noted by both faculty members in this study. However, there were still larger challenges that faced the college, such as the focus on enrollment, which became a higher-level

priority to faculty and their respective programs. As faculty member Mike noted, “Everyone’s fighting for students, right? So right now, it’s enrollment and numbers.” This stage of the change process was further challenged by the staff turnover that took place throughout this grant period. However, the dual enrollment and articulation really brought all members of this grant together, which was a great win for everyone involved. Conversely, not many members of the college stakeholders were involved. Mike noted, “It was administrators who basically created what they call a regional articulation agreement.” Having staff not know what the gains that have been made and what comes next made following the activities much more difficult.

This stage of the organizational change process was unclear from the data collected. The movement to advance career pathways programs was clearly a priority for the state and through several educational organizational change efforts the community colleges experienced the change Kotter presents in this stage.

Stage Eight: Anchoring New Approaches in the Culture

Anchoring new approaches in the culture almost guarantees that the organizational objectives will be successful. Organizational culture encompasses organizational behaviors, norms and shared values that are indoctrinated into all staff at the organization at one point in time (Kotter, 2012, p. 159). Indoctrination of an organization change strategy does not necessarily mean a new culture, but rather aligning existing norms, behaviors, and values to meet the vision and strategy of the new organizational effort. Although, certain stages of Kotter’s organizational change framework were skipped, some of the cultural anchors did show institutionalization.

Administrator 18 expressed:

I was meeting with a department head earlier this week on a different articulation agreement and I mean he even acknowledged, our processes are getting better. Things are moving along quicker. And it wasn't quite part of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund, but I think all of the work that went into setting up the processes for that has helped further along that same work with other departments.

By institutionalizing the process into the organizational culture and fostering these partnerships made through the California Career Pathways Trust Fund made new initiatives easier to implement. Faculty member Mark Smith noted, "There has been a bunch of institutional changes and certainly into Pathways." For faculty member Mike, it is ". . . a lot easier to talk about those things college-wide now, then it probably was before." OCC was successful in institutionalizing new process and procedures into their organization and this has led to stakeholders' acknowledgement of these changes and its positive applications.

It can be inferred that because of the statewide efforts that focused resources into high school and community colleges systems the institutionalization of career pathways models and its components became part of the educational culture. The California Career Pathways Trust Fund helped pave the way in this area for the college, and at least at the curricular articulation and dual enrollment level which was acknowledge by both faculty and administrators who were involved in the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant.

Staff Capacity

One of the primary areas of interest for this study was the engagement of stakeholders that took place with the California Career Pathways Trust Fund at OCC. From the document review and through the interview process it was observed that the engagement of stakeholders was not thorough. Faculty and administrators were the only stakeholders that took ownership of

the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant. Faculty were the stakeholder that ultimately were responsible for advancing the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant outcomes, although their power was limited, and they needed administrators to approve spending plans. Administrator turnover became a challenge to the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant at OCC, and the inconsistency resulted in the vision of the grant being reinterpreted by each new administrator that became the lead through the life of the grant. The implications of this is that the grant should have suffered in its goals, however this did not happen. It is clear that there was something else taking place at the college that allowed for the grant goals to move forward despite some of the missing stages in the organizational change process.

Interviews revealed that the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant was one of several other grants that were part of the colleges budget. OCC had established an internal process for vetting grants and had established a grant management committee that oversaw all grants and helped coordinate the grant with existing department and institutional plans. Additionally, as Administrator 8 pointed out, “The harder part, though, is acknowledging that the institutions aren’t ready to pay for [staff]. Right, and that’s the bigger challenge. Or that we can’t keep adding to people’s workloads.” The additional workload meant that some staff were not able to attend meetings and this resulted in a lack of information. Which was further complicated by the lack of constant communication of program activities with all stakeholders. The result of the grant was that the consortium of colleges used grant funds to fund staff, as well as added additional workloads to staff schedules. This created difficulty in planning and in participation of meetings for the advancement of the grant. Faculty member Mike noted this, when he said, “I think I was just probably spreading myself too thin in terms of what I should be doing.”

Staff turnover turned out to be a major issue for OCC. The loss of almost of all executive and managerial administrative staff made the management of the grant difficult as new staff joined the team and had their own perspective of the goal of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant. Nonetheless, the faculty understood the significance of this grant and their intrinsic motivation was to articulate courses and create connections to the local high schools, since extrinsically, those students would help meet enrollment goals ensuring sustainability for the career pathways programs.

Staff time also became a significant theme during the four years of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant. Administrator 8 noted that not everyone was able to add additional personnel to this project and the result was the need to have individuals add this work to their existing workloads. This created a challenge for the grant, but also a challenge for the staff. For faculty, working their course sessions and then having to attend meetings made it a challenge to stay on top of all the progress that was occurring with the grant. For administrators, it meant that they had to continue to advance the work of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund while also maintaining the deliverables and outcomes for other grants that the college had been awarded.

When Actor Network Theory is overlaid into the analysis of the data the challenges of staff time, staff turnover, and grant activities develop meaning. Actor Network Theory is:

. . . interested in the ways in which networks overcome resistance and strengthen internally, gaining coherence and consistence (stabilize); how they organize (juxtapose elements) and convert (translate) network elements; how they prevent actors from following their own proclivity (become durable); how they enlist others to invest in or follow the program (enroll); how they bestow qualities and motivations to actors

(establish roles as scripts); how they become increasingly transportable and “useful” (simplify); and how they become functionally indispensable (as obligatory points of passage).

Simply put, when observing the California Career Pathways Trust Fund through the Actor Network Theory there is greater complexity than just the absence of an organizational change framework. As Kezar (2001) observed, educational institutions are “. . . loosely coupled systems with strong internal logic and long histories” (p. 126). Since the colleges are loosely coupled systems and can have a lack of coordinated efforts, this adds to the complexity of administering organizational change efforts. This is both a benefit and challenge for an academia that needs to be more receptive to the ever-changing local society and economy.

Organizational Leadership

Research Question 3 of this study focused on the perspectives, attitudes, and lived experiences of students, faculty, and administrators at OCC, about the level of engagement and participation of organizational leadership in the design and development of the career pathway program. During this study, the two main stakeholders indicated that because of the change in leadership the engagement of stakeholders was limited. Through the interview process it was revealed that staff turnover affected the consistent engagement of organizational leaders. In the beginning of the grant Administrator 8 noted that they were “. . . very close to the Executive team. I was the money person, so of course everyone had thoughts and opinions on what we were doing and how we were positioning the funding.” However, as the grant moved forward the Administrator stated, “I will also say though is that we had a lot of turnover with leadership during that period of time.” Administrator 18, who joined the project two years into its inception, reflected that, “I know that our VP of student support services was very involved.

We've had quite a bit of transition here . . . at different phases of the project, they were involved with our activities and aware of what was happening. And supportive. But we've just had quite a bit of transition at all levels." The lack of engagement with leadership due to staff turnover created uncertainty with staff, and lack of consistent mission messaging. Although this staff turnover may have caused serious challenges for other organizations, for OCC it did not affect the outcomes of the grant.

Faculty Mike emphasized that he has, "Been here four years going on five, and I've had five different deans. So, leadership has changed five different times." Faculty Mark Smith, the only staff involved through most of the grant, remembers that leadership engagement was limited to the dean level and below: "I would say above the dean's level, not too much." Mark further explained that, "In the spring of 2017, we got a new college president, and shortly thereafter, then we got a bunch of new vice presidents. So, there's been a lot of turnover since I started full-time here." Again, this staff turnover created confusion and at times some frustration from staff, but overall it did not affect the outcomes of the grant.

This grant was operated through a consortium of colleges and engagement of other senior leaders in this grant varied, according to the administrators of the grant. Administrator 18 recalls that, "At some of our year-end events that we had, some of them participated. I think it varied by college. I think at some colleges they were pretty involved and in others not as much." Although leadership involvement is key in many organizational change efforts, through this grant the senior leadership engagement varied and their involvement was limited from the perspective of faculty and administrators. Nonetheless, the outcomes of the grant were achieved, and the grant was successful even though the engagement of leadership was not clear.

Stability

One of the challenges that arose through the grant period of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant was high numbers of staff turnover at the administrator level. In situations like this, when executives transition, the transformation leaves with that individual (Kotter, 1996, p. 46). However, because of the stability brought by the network of faculty, the organizational change process continued without significant challenges to the grant outcomes. The emergence of the faculty network to drive the change and continue to implement the grant through such turnover was an important finding for the success of the grant. Faculty member Mike further reiterated this point by saying that this has, “been mostly, I think in some ways, faculty-driven.”

The stability that took place was not solely because of “internal logic and long histories” of the community college (Kezar, 2001, p. 126). The motivation to continue and find purpose through uncertainty allowed for faculty to continue the process and engage in the advancement of the grant deliverables. As Birnbaum (1998) and Kezar (2001) suggest, over time, incremental change produces the necessary results to advance institutional goals. The incremental change also took place through the different educational reform efforts that were adopted prior to the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant, as well as those new laws and initiatives that advanced career pathways programs at high schools and community colleges in California.

Internal controls, campus sub-cultures, and institutional goals, alongside departmental goals, created the continuity needed for the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant to progress and maintain course direction. This durability in programming occurred amid lack of consistent involvement from two out of the four stakeholder groups identified through the literature review process. This is what Actor Network Theory defines in the focus on the nature of being through signs and symbols that are created and their interpretation. However, therein

lies the complexity of our systems and of our experience in the sociotechnical world that actors within high school and community colleges networks must navigate. The social and technical culture created through a century of academic instrumentalism allowed for stages in the organizational change process to be missed, although still be able to advance the goals of the grant.

Conclusion

The analysis of interviews revealed the complexities that colleges must consider when implementing an organizational change grant. The California Career Pathways Trust Fund was an unprecedented investment and mandate for successful grantees to engage in regional collaboration and integration. The college engaged as best it could in the development of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant, knowing that each college in the consortium had to undergo its own organizational change strategy since this work was new to all involved. The California Career Pathways Trust Fund documents and stakeholder interviews revealed the large-scale effort that this grant tried to tackle with the five community colleges that served as hubs to the over-thirty local feeder high schools. In particular, the documents revealed just the stakeholders that were involved and the success of the overall outcome goals. It was clear that the process of archiving documents and keeping a record of activities that took place was a challenge for this grant, and perhaps a result of the function of significant amount of staff turnover that took place at OCC.

Furthermore, the lack of an organizational change framework created a challenge for the staff in their consistency in communication, engagement and their vision. As turnover took place at the college, the lack of an organizational framework allowed for new leadership and administrators to add their vision and process to the existing grant. Lastly, the administrators of

this grant looked at each goal set forth by the grant and concentrated their efforts to ensuring that the curriculum alignment and regional articulation agreements were accomplished in the time permitted. This allowed for a targeted focus by faculty on the major components of the grant and thus were prioritized and ensured their success at the end of grant period.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Discussion

The California Career Pathways Trust Fund was the largest investment in California history to advance career pathway programs between high schools and community colleges. The unprecedented investments provided an opportunity for community colleges and high schools to build partnerships and programs that could meet the needs of local employers who are desperately looking for middle skilled workers, those workers that have more than a high school degree but less than a bachelor's degree, to fill high-demand jobs. Several consortia of local education agencies took the opportunity, after being successfully awarded California Career Pathways Trust Fund grants, to initiate organizational change through their organizations.

Organizational change is a significant process at any organization. It requires teams of individuals, leadership involvement, the creation of a communication strategy and continuous loops of communication, as well as a meticulous process for archiving documents and supporting advancement of the organizational change process. These organizational change efforts have been widely studied and their processes have been documented in order to provide examples for similar organizations undergoing this change. However, most of that learning has taken place in the private sector with small and larger for-profit businesses that are attempting to stay competitive in their respective industry. Several researchers have documented these organizational change processes, but none were as highly cited as John Kotter's eight stages of organizational change.

Kotter's eight stages of organizational change created a framework from which to view organizational change at any size organization. The clear application of each stage made organizational change easier to manage at a variety of organizations and companies. However, that same organizational change process has limitations when it comes to public-funded

organizations that are attempting to undergo large-scale organizational change. The nature of publicly funded organizations means that they “do not operate independently of disciplinary societies, the federal government, and other significant forces”, such as employers and local legislative bodies (Kezar, 2001, p. 62). In particular, this connection to external forces such as legislators, and community stakeholders was at the core of California Career Pathways Trust Fund at Oceanside Community College (OCC).

The California Career Pathways Trust Fund provided an unprecedented investment in career pathways and a unique opportunity to view organizational change through a local community college. The focus on stakeholder involvement was of key interest to this study and the focus on understanding the organizational change process and framework that was adopted by those involved in the design and implementation of that process. Organizational change has been observed at higher education institutions and the frameworks have focused on planned change or adaptive change models (Kezar, 2001). The models offer ways to view the change through the human elements of change and focus on the evolutionary or teleological approach, which reflect either a “slow stream of mutations, gradually shaped by environmental influences,” or a change that occurs “because leaders, change agents, and others see the necessity of change,” respectively.

The California Career Pathways Trust Fund offered a timely opportunity to view the change models in practices and observe practices that can support future career pathways organizational change models at community colleges. An initial finding suggested that at Oceanside Community College, an organizational framework was not utilized, and several stakeholders identified as key to the advancement of the grant were not included in the design and implementation of the grant. However, the grant was successful in its goals and outcomes,

which led the researcher to identify what other organizational change efforts, if any, focused on career pathways, might have advanced the goals of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant.

Organizational Change at OCC

The goals of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant at OCC were to (a) create or expand the Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering Technology pathways, (b) facilitate transitions from secondary school to community college through articulation and dual enrollment partnerships, and (c) increase career exploration and work-based learning opportunities for students. Through the document review process, it was observed that student leaders, in addition to employers, did not participate in the design or development of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant, but the activities related to students and employers were successful. According to Kotter's eight stages of organizational change framework the organizational change that took place at OCC was seriously hindered.

Out of the eight stages identified by Kotter only one stage, anchoring into culture, was fully followed and executed. All other stages were either fully ignored, such as the consistent and ubiquitous communication of vision to the entire consortia, or partially adopted such as the guiding coalition that was started early on in the process but then forgotten as attrition plagued the administrators of the grant. A clear finding was the lack of a consistent framework that was adopted through this organizational change process. Although it is unclear what a framework for organizational change should look like at a community college nonetheless a framework must be adopted to help keep a consistent vision, a communication strategy and engagement of all interested stakeholders. Kotter's eight stages offers a good foundation to begin to formulate a

framework, although more research would need to be conducted utilizing Kotter's framework through the design and implementation of an organizational change process.

Stakeholder Engagement in Organizational Change

Faculty members were engaged in the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant from the grant writing process, and through the end of the grant, because they were incentivized to do so through the grant funds that helped update equipment, update career pathway programming and create connections with high schools to grow enrollments. However, this was not the same experience when it came to administrators of the grant. As it was revealed through the interview process, most administrators of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant experienced attrition. There were no administrators on the grant management level and on the leadership level that were maintained through the full grant period. This meant that the vision of the grant fluctuated, which was expressed by the faculty members that participated in this study. Senior leadership participation was also inconsistent throughout the implementation of this grant, especially due to the amount of turnover experienced by OCC. Although this phenomenon was observed at OCC it is unclear what the leadership tenure was of the other partner colleges who were part of the consortia. It is also unclear whether the employer partners were shared among all consortia partners and if this resulted in the successful grant outcomes. Further research needs to be conducted to explore how other consortia partners experienced the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant.

Furthermore, it was unclear what role and responsibilities employers played in the organizational change of the career pathways beyond their engagement in business advisory committees. Through this study, it was observed that employers were engaged in industry events and participated as presenters but there was no indication that they were involved in the design

and development of this grant. More research needs to be conducted on how OCC engages employers in organizational change at OCC particularly as it related to career pathway programming. Additionally, since this grant involved a consortium of colleges, it would be important to view the activities of each of the consortia members and to determine if employer activities were shared amongst the consortia partners.

Additionally, as it was stated earlier by Administrator 8, student engagement in this organizational change process was not present. Although it is unclear what role students might play in this process or what type of supports they would need to receive in order to successfully engage, it was clear that students had opinions about the investments of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant. Overall, stakeholder engagement was inconsistent in the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant. Nonetheless, all stakeholders that who were interviewed agreed on the impact that the California Career Pathways Trust Fund had on OCC and faculty directly credited the California Career Pathways Trust Fund for the revival of their departments. And to this day, these activities have continued and have been expanded due to the culture change that the career pathways caused at OCC.

Organizational Change

Organizational change is a complex collection of planning, activities, collaborations and engagements with multiple stakeholders over time. For community college leadership, this collection of activities can involve “collecting and analyzing data, calculating cost-benefit ratios, establishing systems for communicating directors to those who will implement the decision, collecting information from others to ensure accountability, and constantly comparing outcomes to objectives” (Birnbaum, 1988, p. 78). Kezar (2001) explains that these activities are often seen as linear and rational with managers being a key component of their success, all

driven by a set of goals that are addressing change (p. 33). He writes, “It starts by diagnosing the problem within the organization on an ongoing basis (so it is generative) and searching for solutions (change initiatives)” (p. 33). As stated in the problem statement the need for middle skilled workers has been a driving force for the proliferation of career pathways programs, and although the colleges were individually able to address a few of the issues, it was not big enough to tackle the larger issues of scale.

The California Career Pathways Fund offered an opportunity to move this work forward, but after noticing that the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant activities were not the sole drivers for change the researcher undertook the task of finding similar legislative efforts that might have supported the change of career pathways adoption at OCC. The following figure (Figure 1) displays the statewide initiatives that supported career pathways adoption across community colleges and high schools:

California Career Pathways Organizational Change Efforts

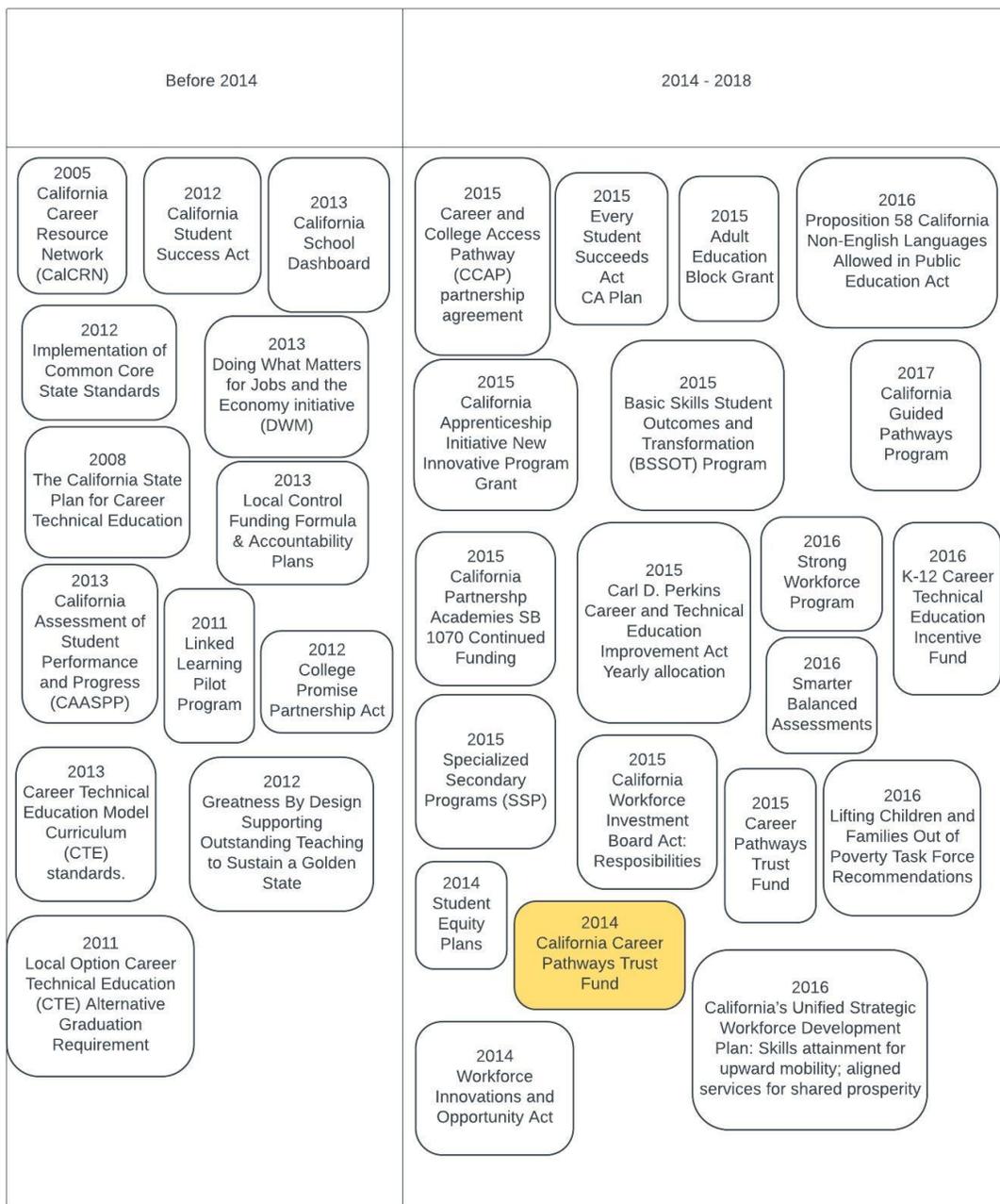


Figure 1. California Career Pathways Organizational Change Efforts.

Organizational change took place at OCC through the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant from the years 2014 to 2018, however there were several other legislative initiatives

with career pathways elements that were also advancing similar efforts during the same period of time such as the Adult Education Block Grant, the Every Student Succeeds Act and the Strong Workforce Program, to name a few. Additionally, the researcher identified career pathways initiatives that were taking place prior to the development of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund and noticed that those initiatives all supported the goals of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund. By identifying these organizational change efforts that were all supporting career pathway programming, consistent with the goals of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund at OCC, the researcher was able to identify enterprise level change that according to research, helps advance large scale change along with the individual, interpersonal and organizational levels (Kezar, 2001).

Although more research must be conducted to identify how each of the state-level initiative's goals were designed and implemented at OCC and how those goals set the stage to advance the goals of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant. It is clear that the California Career Pathways Trust Fund did not live in a vacuum and it was part of a larger organizational change effort by the state to advance career pathway programming to high schools and community colleges. Moreover, a framework for identifying the components of an organizational change process must be identified to ensure the same framework is applied universally to all initiatives. Kotter's eight-stage process provides a good foundation to identifying these components, but the unique experience and culture of community colleges must be taken into consideration for a framework that truly captures their unique experience.

As Levin (1998a) concludes, "organizational change is the interplay between external and internal forces, between the perceptions of internal members of organizational identity and the external environment and between the organizational fit with the external environment and

organizational symbols that match environmental needs” (p. 53). So, a framework that is adopted must take into account the internal and external forces that interact with the college. OCC has had a history of organizational change and movement towards career pathway models. Through this history and because of the stability of faculty, OCC was able to advance its grant goals and create the change the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant was intending.

More research needs to be conducted specifically to better understand the unique characteristics of OCC and the underlying organizational change framework that exists within the college. It is clear from this study that although a specific framework was not adopted, that an underlying set of actions took place that advanced the goals of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant. Although none of the stakeholders interviewed were able to articulate the framework, it is clear that an underlying set of processes helped drive the change necessary for the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant goals to become a success at OCC.

Actor Networks and Self Determination Theory

Throughout the gathering of data three themes began to emerge. First, the significance that the administrator turnover had on the organizational change process. The turnover was significant that both faculty and administrator, as well as students noticed its occurrence. Additionally, the staff turnover affected the constant communication of the grant, as well as some confusion about the original mission of the college. Second, the motivations of faculty, both extrinsic and intrinsic, to move the grant outcomes forward. The grant funding provided extrinsic motivations for faculty to engage in grant activities knowing that the equipment they need to teach would be upgraded to the newest industry standards. Intrinsically, faculty also acknowledged that by upgrading their equipment they would be able to attract students to their programs and thus ensure their courses would continue. Finally, the internal logic of the college

to keep grant activities moving despite the turnover from the administrators of the grant. As noted in the findings, OCC missed several stages in the organizational change process, but that did not stop the goals from being accomplished. There was something else, an institutional “internal logic” (Kezar, 2001), that allowed for stakeholders and other consortia partners to move the grant forward despite several administrator and leadership changes at OCC, the fiscal and program lead college. These themes were observed through the use of the Actor Network Theory and Self Determination Theory frameworks that were used as lenses into the experiences that were taken place at OCC through the course of this study.

Actor Network Theory allowed the research to view stakeholders beyond the human actors that were or were not engaged in the study. Although the obvious lack of consistent staff added complexities to the implementation of any grant, the Actor Network Theory framework showed how the presence of the staff turnover also affected the lack of an organizational framework and added further confusion to faculty who were implementing the grant outcomes. Additionally, Actor Network Theory revealed other actors such as the internal controls that allowed for the grant management to move forward, the faculty involvement, the collegiality between institutions, and departmental goals that supported established institutional goals empowered actors to maintain their grant outcomes. Lastly, Actor Network Theory provided a last layer of introspection to look beyond the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant and identify other non-human actors that advance the goals of the grant. Thus, allowing for the discovery of several other state-level initiatives that were all advancing career pathways programs at OCC and throughout the network for community colleges and high schools in California.

When applying Self Determination Theory frameworks to this study it was observed that stakeholders were motivated by intrinsic and extrinsic motivations that created additional consistency and intentionality to move the grant forward. The intrinsic motivation was a result of stakeholders finding the work interesting, challenging, and enjoyable. Extrinsicly, faculty cherished the grant funding for providing needed investments that would help struggling departments update their equipment and once again maintain a competitive edge for recruiting students, and ultimately preserving their employment.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to observe the level of engagement of multiple stakeholders at a local community college undergoing an organizational change effort. Through this study several findings were revealed, specifically the fact that two out of the four stakeholders were not engaged through the design and development of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant. Although there was a lack of full engagement in the grant by all stakeholder groups, the grant was still able to move forward and the grant's outcomes were successfully accomplished. This finding was of unique interest to the researcher since organizational change theory and the application of Kotter's eight stages of organizational change suggests that the lack of stages almost certainly equates to negative outcomes in organizational change. However, due to other unforeseen factors the grant was successful, and the outcomes were met. It's unclear what these factors might be and more research needs to be conducted to understand how OCC was able to advance the grant despite the missing organizational change stages. The discovery of several other state-level organizational change efforts taking place during the years of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant and prior to the grant, expands the idea that the California Career Pathways Trust Fund may not have

been the only large-scale organizational change effort that advanced the goals of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant.

Oceanside Community College's California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant was successful in its three goals of (a) creating or expanding the Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering Technology pathway, (b) facilitating transitions from secondary school to community college through articulation and dual enrollment partnerships, and (c) increasing career exploration and work-based learning opportunities. These goals moved forward the career pathways programs at OCC although it was unclear how all stakeholders experienced those goals. Faculty and administrators had a direct connection to the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant and the outcomes related directly to their respective interests for regional integration and articulation among all consortia partners.

Grant goals aside, student leaders that were interviewed displayed a genuine interest in being more involved in academic planning and strategic planning at the college. However, it is unclear what skills students bring to these conversations since there is no available data on technical and soft skills that students need as they are engaged in organizational change at a local community college. However, what was clear was that students had a rich diversity of ideas and provided unique perspectives to career pathway conversations. It would benefit the field of education to explore the aspect of providing a venue for student leaders to more directly contribute to the advancement of academic planning at community colleges.

Lastly, employer engagement was another unclear aspect of stakeholder engagement through the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant. Although employers were a key aspect of the career pathway programming it was unclear how they were engaged in this particular grant. The researcher was able to discover other career pathways state efforts that

might have engaged employers, but it is unclear how those efforts were connected to the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant. More research needs to be conducted to understand how employers were engaged through similar initiatives at OCC, how those efforts supported the California Career Pathways Trust Fund and how employers currently engage throughout the college community.

Overall, stakeholder engagement was a challenge to observe through this study. Half of the stakeholders identified were not a part of this grant at the design and development stages. Administrators and senior leadership who participated early on in the design and development of this grant left at some time after the grant's acquisition. Since the study only focused on the fiscal grant administrator college and not the other four colleges, it is unclear whether those colleges had different stakeholder engagement and whether those colleges took a more active role in ensuring the grants outcomes were being met with support from the identified stakeholders. More research needs to be conducted to fully understand all the unique aspects of this grant's consortia of partners and explore how all four stakeholder groups were engaged through each of the partner colleges, as well at the high schools.

Recommendations

This study focused solely on the fiscal agent of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant, and thus not representative of the full range of activities that took place within the consortia of colleges and high schools that participated in this grant. More research must be conducted to include all consortia members to fully understand the breath of activities in stakeholder engagement that took place with the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant. Furthermore, it would benefit the field to gauge the level of engagement of each stakeholder over

time and understand the overlap that exists between grant-funded periods and non-grant-funded periods, as well as how stakeholders are engaged with grants that share similar goals.

One of the significant issues raised by administrators and faculty was the amount of staff time needed to ensure the grant outcomes were being met. Both administrators spoke to the challenges that came with having a grant, but no funding to support fulltime staff at every site where the activities took place. This caused several capacity issues with faculty, which was expressed by both faculty members who were interviewed for this study. State leadership should consider how the lack of dedicated staff time and capacity depreciates the goals of state grants. More research should be conducted into issues of staff time and capacity implementing organizational change efforts and their effects on morale, retention and grant outcomes.

Furthermore, under California state law, a state mandate is a “requirement by state government directing local government to provide a service or a higher level of an existing service” (Cromartie, 2014). Under this definition, the activities and goals of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund created a new mandated program that the community college continues to administer without continued funding through this grant. The grant activities of (a) creating or expanding the Advanced Manufacturing & Engineering Technology pathway, (b) facilitating transitions from secondary school to community college through articulation and dual enrollment partnerships, and (c) increasing career exploration and work-based learning opportunities, continue to this day. However, the funding associated with the grant has ended and the community college began identifying internal funding opportunities and applying for other similar grants to maintain the same level of program activities that are now expected of faculty, administration, students and employers. This is not a sustainable strategy, especially since the goals of the career pathways programming is to continue to meet the needs of

employers over time. As employers continue to evolve it is imperative that community colleges continue to be receptive and supportive of employer needs, and a dedicated funding stream into career pathways programming that were expanded and created through the California Career Pathways Trust Fund grant should be identified.

A significant finding in the study was the lack of an adopted framework to carry out the grant activities of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund. Administrators used grant outcomes as goal posts and all activities with stakeholders were conducted to achieve those outcomes. There was no agreed-upon framework that used specific stages, communication and engagement strategies to ensure consistency in grant activities. The challenges due to this lack of framework meant that the vision was also a moving goal post, and the communication of activities was inconsistent throughout the process. Additionally, the short-term wins, the empowerment of additional staff and advancing of more change were missing elements of this grant. An organizational change framework would have been helpful for new staff that joined the grant later on in the process and would have allowed for staff to continue efforts without interruption. More research should be conducted to explore what organizational change framework is appropriate for different types of change efforts and that information should be share through grant opportunities to help support grant applicants.

Lastly, stakeholder engagement was inconsistent with this grant. Although the goals of the grant were accomplished there is a lack of clarity about what role stakeholders play in organizational change efforts, particularly employers and students. Through the study it was unclear what role employers played in this grant. Employers, as one of the beneficiaries of the educational system, particularly career pathway programs, have a stake in these programs and their perspectives should be present in these programs. Especially since employers will be the

organizations that hire these students into their companies at the end of the programs. More research must be conducted that looks at what role stakeholders play in organizational change efforts at community colleges and the mapping out of the variety of grants that are supporting similar efforts that engage stakeholders.

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Appendix A: Permission to Conduct the Study at the College

Luis Barrera Castañón

Address 1

Address 2

Date

Vice President

Oceanside Community College

Re: Ed.D. Research Project on the California Career Pathways Trust Fund

Dear Vice President:

My name is Luis Barrera Castañón and I have been worked in education and workforce policy and programs for the last decade. I am presently working on an Educational Doctorate in Educational Leadership through Cal State Northridge. As part of the process I am conducting a research study on the lived experience of administrators, employers, staff, partners and students involved in the California Career Pathways Trust Fund (CCPTF). I am seeking your assistance to enable me to pursue this study. The study will involve a total of twelve one-to-one interviews with faculty, administrators, employers and students that were involved in the CCPTF to reflect on their personal experience through the development of this grant.

I am asking for your permission to interview these stakeholders in your college community for this study. I will need to conduct a 60 – 90-minute interview with your four of your grant administrators, four employers, four faculty and four students. I would conduct these individual interviews at a time and place convenient and comfortable for them. With permission from the grant administrators, employers, staff, and students, the interviews will be audio recorded for accuracy of recollection and ease of transcription. Grant administrators, employers, staff, and students will be asked to verify the transcripts of the interviews conducted.

To maintain the integrity of the study certain practices will be in place. Pseudonyms for the school and all participants will be used. All excerpts from interviews used in public communication of any kind will have names and identity markers removed. All documents and recorded files will be destroyed and in the interim, kept under lock and key and accessible only to the researcher. Observations and communications with one participant will not be discussed without consent with any other participants. Participants have the right to withdraw at any point during the study. The timeline started in the spring semester, possibly March and will continue until all interviews have been collected, transcribed and analyzed through the end of the 2018 spring semester.

The intended outcome of this study is to better understand the experience of grant administrators, employers, staff, and students for the purposes of finding out how these stakeholders were engaged and what their participation was through the CCPTF grant period. The information may be shared through a publication in a scholarly journal, presentation at a scholarly conference, and an Educational Doctorate dissertation.

If you could please sign and return the attached form I would greatly appreciate it. Also, please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or if you have suggestions for possible participants for this study.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Luis Barrera Castañón, Ed.D. Candidate
Educational Leadership and Policy Studies
California State University, Northridge
310-430-6964
LBCastanon@gmail.com

Appendix B: Electronic Mail Invitation to Participate

Hello, I am Luis Barrera Castañón, and I am contacting you as a doctoral student at Cal State Northridge (CSUN). The purpose of this e-mail is to inform you about a research project called “Organizational Change and Stakeholder Engagement in the California Career Pathways Trust Fund at a California Community College.” I was student body president at Hilltop Community College in 2002 and I am very interested about how students and other stakeholders were engaged in investments at Oceanside Community College.

Please read the information and determine if you would consider being interviewed in this study. I will like to interview student leaders involved at OCC during the years of 2014 – 2018.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to learn more about the role students, faculty, administrators and employers played at Oceanside Community College during the years of 2014 – 2018 for the California Career Pathways Trust Fund.

Procedures

You will be asked to share your perspectives, attitudes, and experiences in an individual interview. The interview will last about an hour. The interview will be audiotaped for future transcription purposes. The interview will take place at a location that is convenient to you, with the possibility of doing the interview over Skype or similar tele-conference platform, which will also allow for recording the interview.

Risk and Benefits

There is no anticipated risk to you for participation in this study. Involvement in this study will have no negative impacts on your connection to the institution and the researcher will ensure that if there are any conflicts the participant will have the ability to exit the study. This study is not connected to OCC and your involvement in this study will not impact any prior agreement or enrollment with the college. You will receive a \$20 Starbucks gift card and written thank you note upon completion of the study.

Confidentiality

All information that is attained about this interview and will be coded using pseudonyms, and all identification will be kept confidential.

Participation and Withdrawal

You may choose to participate or refuse to participate. If you volunteer to participate, you may still withdraw at any time without any consequence.

Contact Information

Please feel free to contact me directly for any information, comments, or concerns at LBCastanon@gmail.com or telephone (310) 430-6964.

Thank you for your consideration,
Luis Barrera Castañón

Appendix C: Electronic Mail Confirmation

STUDY CONFIRMATION EMAIL:

Dear [first name],

First of all, thank you for volunteering to be part of this study. Your perspectives in the involvement of this project will help shed valuable data to understand the activities that took place during the years of the California Career Pathways Trust Fund at Oceanside Community College. At your convenience, I would like to schedule an hour time to talk at your convenience in the next few weeks. Please reply to this email to schedule the time to talk and if you have any questions about this study.

I look forward to hearing from you soon. Thank you again for your participation.

Sincerely,

Luis Barrera Castañón

Doctoral Candidate, California State University, Northridge

Cell: 310-430-6964

Appendix D: Interview Protocol

Administrator, Faculty, Employer or Student:

Pseudonym:

What is your age?

What is your current employment status:

Title at the time of this project:

When were you engaged in this CCPTF grant?

How would you describe your race/ethnicity?

What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed? (If you're currently enrolled in school, please indicate the highest degree you have received.)

Administrators

Interview Question 1: How did you first hear about the California Career Pathways Trust Fund (CCPTF) grant?

- **IQ1a:** From what you can remember, what was the vision of the CCPTF grant?
- **IQ1b:** What was the strategy used to communicate the vision of this grant to you?

Interview Question 2: How were you involved in the CCPTF grant?

- **IQ2a:** Who else was involved in the CCPTF grant and what were their roles?
- **IQ2b:** Would you say there was a guiding group of grant leads, and if so, who were those individuals in that group?

Interview Question 3: From your perspective, was there a sense of urgency that came with the CCPTF grant?

- **IQ3a:** Can you describe what that urgency was?

Interview Question 4: Please describe how decisions were made on the CCPTF grant and who was involved in decision-making?

- **IQ4a:** Who were the members of the decision-making group and how were decisions decided?
- **IQ4b:** Were there barriers to implementation that were seen to impede the vision of this CCPTF grant?
- **IQ4c:** Were solutions to those barriers identified and communicated to you?

Interview Question 5: In what ways did you interact and engage with leadership at OCC through the CCPTF grant?

- **IQ5a:** Did you interact and engage with leadership at partners' organizations?

Interview Question 6: What was the communication structure and process of the CCPTF grant at Oceanside Community College?

- **IQ6a:** Were others at OCC empowered to advance the CCPTF grant and in what way?

Interview Question 7: In what ways were you provided with information or training to engage in the development and implementation of the CCPTF grant?

Interview Question 8: From your perspective what were some of the short-term wins of the CCPTF grant?

- **IQ8a:** Were short-term wins acknowledged and communicated to you and the partners?

Interview Question 9: Did the CCPTF grant cause changes in the institutional culture at Oceanside Community College?

- **IQ9a:** If so, can you identify ways that the CCPTF has been anchored into the institutional culture and systems?

Interview Question 10: Finally, were you satisfied with the activities and goals of the CCPTF grant and did you find the work meaningful?

Faculty

Interview Question 1: How did you first hear about the California Career Pathways Trust Fund (CCPTF) grant?

- **IQ1a:** From what you can remember, what was the mission of the CCPTF grant?

Interview Question 2: How were you involved in the CCPTF grant?

- **IQ2a:** Who else was involved in the CCPTF grant and what were their roles?

Interview Question 3: From your perspective, was there a sense of urgency that came with the CCPTF grant?

- **IQ3a:** Can you describe what that urgency was?

Interview Question 4: Please describe how decisions were made on the CCPTF grant and who was involved in decision-making?

- **IQ4a:** Who were the members of the decision-making group and how were decisions decided?

Interview Question 5: In what ways did you interact and engage with leadership at OCC through the CCPTF grant?

- **IQ5a:** How did you interact and engage with leadership at partners' organizations?

Interview Question 6: What was the communication structure and process of the CCPTF grant at Oceanside Community College?

- **IQ6a:** How were others at OCC empowered to advance the CCPTF grant?

Interview Question 7: In what ways were you provided with information or training to engage in the development and implementation of the CCPTF grant?

Interview Question 8: From your perspective what were some of the short-term wins of the CCPTF grant?

Interview Question 9: In what ways did the CCPTF grant change the institutional culture at Oceanside Community College?

Interview Question 10: Finally, how satisfied were you with the activities and goals of the CCPTF grant and how did you find the work meaningful?

Employers

Interview Question 1: How did you first hear about the California Career Pathways Trust Fund (CCPTF) grant?

- **IQ1a:** From what you can remember, what was the mission of the CCPTF grant?

Interview Question 2: How were you involved in the CCPTF grant?

- **IQ2a:** Who else was involved in the CCPTF grant and what were their roles?

Interview Question 3: From your perspective, was there a sense of urgency that came with the CCPTF grant?

- **IQ3a:** Can you describe what that urgency was?

Interview Question 4: Please describe how decisions were made on the CCPTF grant and who was involved in decision-making?

- **IQ4a:** Who were the members of the decision-making group and how were decisions decided?

Interview Question 5: In what ways did you interact and engage with leadership at OCC through the CCPTF grant?

- **IQ5a:** How did you interact and engage with leadership at partners' organizations?

Interview Question 6: What was the communication structure and process of the CCPTF grant at Oceanside Community College?

- **IQ6a:** How were others at OCC empowered to advance the CCPTF grant?

Interview Question 7: In what ways were you provided with information or training to engage in the development and implementation of the CCPTF grant?

Interview Question 8: From your perspective what were some of the short-term wins of the CCPTF grant?

Interview Question 9: In what ways did the CCPTF grant change the institutional culture at Oceanside Community College?

Interview Question 10: Finally, how satisfied were you with the activities and goals of the CCPTF grant and how did you find the work meaningful?

Students

Interview Question 1: How did you first hear about the California Career Pathways Trust Fund (CCPTF) grant?

- **IQ1a:** From what you can remember, what was the mission of the CCPTF grant?

Interview Question 2: How were you involved in the CCPTF grant?

- **IQ2a:** Who else was involved in the CCPTF grant and what were their roles?

Interview Question 3: From your perspective, was there a sense of urgency that came with the CCPTF grant?

- **IQ3a:** Can you describe what that urgency was?

Interview Question 4: Please describe how decisions were made on the CCPTF grant and who was involved in decision-making?

- **IQ4a:** Who were the members of the decision-making group and how were decisions decided?

Interview Question 5: In what ways did you interact and engage with leadership at OCC through the CCPTF grant?

- **IQ5a:** How did you interact and engage with leadership at partners' organizations?

Interview Question 6: What was the communication structure and process of the CCPTF grant at Oceanside Community College?

- **IQ6a:** How were others at OCC empowered to advance the CCPTF grant?

Interview Question 7: In what ways were you provided with information or training to engage in the development and implementation of the CCPTF grant?

Interview Question 8: From your perspective what were some of the short-term wins of the CCPTF grant?

Interview Question 9: In what ways did the CCPTF grant change the institutional culture at Oceanside Community College?

Interview Question 10: Finally, how satisfied were you with the activities and goals of the CCPTF grant and how did you find the work meaningful?