Learning Community Coordinating Council

October 19th, 2023 - 6:00PM

1612 North 24th Street, Omaha, Nebraska 68110

Learning Community Vision: That all children within the Learning Community achieve academic success without regard to social or economic circumstance.

The subjects to be discussed or considered, or upon which any formal action may be taken, are as follows: (Items do not have to be taken in the same order as listed.)

I. Opening the Meeting

- i. Call to Order: The regular October meeting of the Learning Community Council is called to order on October 19th, 2023, at 6 p.m.
- ii. Council Mission Statement: Together with school districts and community organizations as partners, we demonstrate, share, and implement more effective practices to measurably improve educational outcomes for children and families in poverty.
- iii. Public Notice and Compliance Nebraska Open Meetings Law
- iv. Council Roll Call:
- v. Pledge of Allegiance
- II. Public Comment

III. Reports

- i. Chair
 - i. Action Item: Motion to Accept Resignation of Brian Thommes from the Coordinating Council
- ii. CEO
- iii. Treasurer
- iv. Legal Counsel
- v. Foundation

IV. Consent Agenda

Unless removed from the consent agenda, items identified within the consent agenda will be acted on at one time.

- i. Minutes of the September 28th, 2023, meeting of the Council
- ii. Treasurer's Report dated September 30th, 2023
- iii. Budget to Actual 4QFY 2022/2023 financial statements

V. Programming Update

a. Centers Updates-PU Presentation

- b. Superintendents' Plan- Evaluation of Superintendent's Plan by BECI
- c. District Initiative- Presentation by Ralston Public Schools by Amber Scott

VI. Subcommittee Reports

- a) Elementary Learning and Diversity Subcommittee (ELD)
- b) Budget, Finance and Audit Subcommittee
- c) Legislative Subcommittee
- d) Administration and Personnel Subcommittee
- e) Transition Subcommittee

VII. New Business

Upcoming Meeting – November 16th, 2023 – Learning Community Center of North Omaha, 1612 North 24th Street, Omaha, NE 68110

VIII. Adjourn

*Closed Session: If, during the course of the meeting, discussion of any item on the agenda should be held in a closed meeting, the council will conduct a closed meeting in accordance with the Nebraska Open Meetings Law.

**Sequence of Agenda: The sequence of agenda topics is subject to change at the discretion of the Council. Please arrive at the beginning of the meeting.

UPCOMING LEARNING COMMUNITY EVENTS:

Advisory Committee	To Be Determined
LC Coordinating Council	November 16 th , 2023, 6:00 p.m.
	Learning Community Center of North Omaha, 1612 N. 24 th Street, Omaha, NE
Subcouncil #1	To Be Determined
Subcouncil #2	To Be Determined
Subcouncil #3	To Be Determined
Subcouncil #4	To Be Determined
Subcouncil #5	To Be Determined
Subcouncil #6	To Be Determined

HANDOUTS TO ACCOMPANY THIS AGENDA ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- Council Member Letter of Resignation (Brian Thommes)
- CEO Report
- LCCC Minutes dated September 28th, 2023
- September Treasurer's Report dated September 30th, 2023
- Budget to Actual 4QFY 2022/2023 financial statements
- Center Updates
- Parent University Presentation
- BECI Evaluation
- Ralston Public School Presentation

To whom it may concern:

Effective Immediately I'm resigning from the Learning Community of Douglas and Sarpy County. I 100% believe in the mission of the Learning Community and for everything they are wanting to accomplish. I believe my effectiveness on the Council has come to a close. It was my honor and pleasure to serve as chair for the last 10 months and as a council member for the last 5 years.

Godspeed fellow Council Members

Brian Thommes



1612 North 24th Street Omaha, Nebraska 68110 Phone: 402.964.2405

Chief Executive Officer

Dr. Bradley Ekwerekwu

COORDINATING COUNCIL OFFICERS

Chair

Brian Thommes

Vice Chair

Mark Hoeger

Secretary

Angie Miller

Treasurer Tim Hall

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Achievement Subcouncil 1 Mike Kuhn Brian Thommes

Achievement Subcouncil 2

Carol Hahn Sharnelle Shelton

Achievement Subcouncil 3

Mark Hoeger Sally Otis

Achievement Subcouncil 4

Angie Miller Amy Scott

Achievement Subcouncil 5

Douglas Brady Tonya Ward

Achievement Subcouncil 6

Andrew Brock Tim Hall

MISSION

Together with school districts and community organizations as partners, we demonstrate, share and implement more effective practices to measurably improve educational outcomes for children and families in poverty.

VISION

That all children within the Learning Community achieve academic success without regard to social or economic circumstance.

LearningCommunityDS.org

OCTOBER 19, 2023 LCCC MEETING

CEO REPORT

- 1. The Learning Community of Douglas and Sarpy Counties would like to thank Mr. Brian Thommes for his dedicated service for the last 5 years. Brian has represented Subcouncil 1 with great fervor and consistency. We wish him all the best in his future endeavors.
- 2. The Learning Community of Douglas and Sarpy Counties will hold a special election on November 16, 2023 to elect a Subcouncil 1 member. Please refer to the Learning Community website for additional information and application materials.
- 3. At tonight's meeting, the LCCC will hear from Ralston Public Schools. Please participate in the conversation to learn more about the district initiatives program, evaluation, and overall impact in the school/community.
- 4. Please review the Centers Update meeting material to learn more about current events going on at the Centers. We are fortunate to have Mr. Nghia Le, the Parent University Program Director, present updates on current and future programming and family engagement at LCCNO.
- 5. At tonight's meeting, the LCCC will hear from BECI as they present their evaluation of the Superintendents' Early Childhood Plan. LCCC members are encouraged to ask questions, engage in dialogue, and collaborate with our valued program partner.
- 6. Discussions continue with Omaha Economic Development Corporation (OEDC) and El Mero Mero are on-going to discuss renewing the leases at the LCCNO and LCCSO locations. The Executive subcommittee will review terms and advise on next steps.
- 7. Be aware that we will be hearing from MMI at November's LCCC meeting to discuss the yearly LC program evaluation. LCCC members are encouraged to ask questions, engage in dialogue, and promote collaboration with our valued program partner. There will be a Data Walk on November 9 at 3:30 PM at LCCNO to provide an in-depth look at specific data points. Please join the meeting if you are able!

Learning Community Coordinating Council

September 28th, 2023 – 6:00PM

1612 North 24th, Omaha, Nebraska

Meeting Minutes

Learning Community Vision: That all children within the Learning Community achieve academic success without regard to social or economic circumstance.

The subjects to be discussed or considered, or upon which any formal action may be taken, are as follows: (Items do not have to be taken in the same order as listed.)

I. Opening the Meeting

- i. Call to Order: The regular September meeting of the Learning Community Council is called to order on September 28th, 2023, at 6:02 p.m.
- ii. Council Mission Statement: Together with school districts and community organizations as partners, we demonstrate, share, and implement more effective practices to measurably improve educational outcomes for children and families in poverty.
- iii. Public Notice and Compliance Nebraska Open Meetings Law

A meeting of the Coordinating Council of the Learning Community of Douglas and Sarpy Counties was held September 28th, 2023. Notice of the meeting, containing the date, time, place, and agenda, was given in advance thereof by publication in the Daily Record on September 21st, 2023. The proof of publication has been received and will be made a permanent part of the record of the meeting. Notice of the agenda was given to all members of the Council on September 22nd, 2023.

iv. Council Roll Call:

Voting Members Present: Brady, Brock, Hahn, Hall, Hoeger, Kuhn, Miller, Otis,

Thommes, Shelton, Ward

Voting Members Excused:

Members Absent: Scott

Staff Present: Ekwerekwu, Lewis, Lopez, O'Hara, Videgla

Also Present: Koley Jessen, Emspace

v. Pledge of Allegiance

II. Public Comment

A. Reports

i. Chair- Welcome everyone and shared that he has been in contact with Sheri Beckett (Nebraska Education) in accordance with the transition of the CEO. He is also talking with Margaret and putting

information together and will share that once it's ready. He also stated that the process of transition is detailed and asked for everyone patience as they work to get everything together.

ii. CEO-

- 1. Thank you to LCCC members for participating in subcommittee meetings and engaging with our program partners in constructive conversations related to our Strategic Plan and organizational mission. Your presence matters and your advocacy ensures that Learning Community families continue to thrive in multiple ways.
- 2. Please review the Centers Update meeting material to learn more about current events going on at the Centers. We are very excited to discuss new staff members, new families onboarded, and upcoming family recruitment opportunities. Please let us know if you have any questions.
- 3. Discussions continue with the LUND property management company, as well as Omaha Economic Development Corporation (OEDC), to discuss renewing the lease at the LCCNO location. The current lease expires in November of 2024 and negotiations are currently underway to secure lease options moving forward. More to come at upcoming meetings...
- 4. At tonight's meeting, the LCCC will hear from the district partners and the Learning Community Foundation, specifically from former Council Chair Lorraine Chang. Please participate in the conversation to learn more about the Foundation's work and ability to support LC families with future initiatives.
- 5. The LC staff continues to assess physical locations for the LCCSO satellite location. Expansion is a must for South Omaha. We will engage the ELD subcommittee to thoroughly discuss our action items as they arise to ensure that we are mindful of all necessary technical logistics.
- 6. Be aware that we will be hearing from BECI at October's LCCC meeting to discuss the yearly Superintendents' Early Childhood Plan evaluation report. LCCC members are encouraged to ask questions, engage in dialogue, and help strategize with our valued program partner.
- 7. Be aware that we will be hearing from MMI at November's LCCC meeting to discuss the yearly LC program evaluation. LCCC members are encouraged to ask questions, engage in dialogue, and help strategize with our valued program partner. There will be a Data Walk on November 9 at 3:30 PM at LCCNO to provide an in-depth look at specific data points.
- iii. Treasurer- He shared updates with the board and talked about the upcoming Avalon action item that will be coming up under ELD (Elementary Learning and Diversity Subcommittee) report.
- iv. Legal Counsel- No report
- v. Foundation- Presentation by Lorraine Chang

III. Consent Agenda

Unless removed from the consent agenda, items identified within the consent agenda will be acted on at one time.

i. Minutes of the September 7th, 2023, meeting of the Council

ii. Treasurer's Report- dated August 31st, 2023

Motion first by Thommes, second by Kuhn, to approve the Minutes of the September 7th, 2023, and Treasurer's Report dated August 31st, 2023.

Yeas: Brady, Brock, Hahn, Hall, Hoeger, Kuhn, Miller, Otis, Shelton, Thommes, Nays: Ward, Motion carried.

IV. Programming Updates

a) Centers Updates-

Attached is a written report from the North and South Center.

Conversation is open with district representatives from Millard, Ralston, and Westside to identify fall programming in West Omaha.

- i. Ralston has identified three topics their families are interested in and need support with. The topics are:
 - i Mental Health and behavior support
 - ii Parenting Strategies
 - iii Personal and Family Finance.
- ii. Classes will be offered in the fall at Karen Western and Seymour Elementary School.
- **iii. Millard** would also like to offer programming in their school district; they are requesting funding to hire a part-time person to act as a district liaison between Millard and the Learning Community.
- b) Superintendent's Plan-
- c) District Initiatives-

ED is working on outlining the guidelines to present the Special Projects funding to our districts. We will utilize the same formula used for district allocations to distribute funding. Initial meetings with district representatives will start in October.

V. Subcommittee Reports-

- a) Elementary Learning and Diversity Subcommittee (ELD)- ELD committee is starting to ramp up for end of the year report from BECI & MMI. They are discussing what the evaluation is going to look at. Miller shared that the evaluation will be different from what it has always been from previous years. Rather this year, the board will receive a 1—16 pages report given details of all that BECI has evaluated this year. She is also sharing how she is excited to see the results in October. Miller also shared that she will not be presenting in October.
- b) Budget, Finance and Audit Subcommittee- Hall shared the ideology behind the Avalon services and why the company services are needed. He shared that they had asked Alice to find potential organizations and through meeting them and researching, they decided to go with Avalon for they are an organization that will do all the work locally and with that, the committee recommended Avalon for these services.
- **i. Action Item:** Motion to accept Avalon as the vendor for the digital conversion project service for the Learning Community.

Motion first by Hall, second by Kuhn.

Yeas: Brady, Brock, Hahn, Hall, Hoeger, Kuhn, Miller, Otis, Shelton, Thommes, Nays: Ward, Motion carried.

- c) Legislative Subcommittee- Brock shared they had a meeting yesterday and discuss their feedback on the 10% cap. They played different scenarios and were shocked at the results that came across. Lewis stepped in and shared the breakdown of all administration of funds related to the cap. She shared that going forward, they now understanding that only the executive part is pitched at that cap. With all the scenarios discussed and after talking with ESU, they realized that they do not need to raise the 10% cap.
- **ii**. **Action Item:** Motion to authorize Kent to conduct lobbying efforts towards elimination of a primary election with respect to Learning Community if not enough candidates declared and, in that instance, would advance directly to the general election.

Motion first by Brock, second by Shelton.

Yeas: Brady, Brock, Hahn, Hall, Hoeger, Kuhn, Miller, Otis, Shelton, Thommes, Ward, Motion carried.

- d) Administration and Personnel- Otis shared they haven't had the last couple meetings and are holding off to make changes on the job descriptions and personnel handbook due to the transition of CEO. She asked the chair to motion to create a committee for the transition of the CEO.
- VI. Upcoming Meeting September 28th, 2023 Learning Community Center of North Omaha, 1612 North 24th Street, Omaha, NE 68110
- VII. New Business-
 - 1) Transition Subcommittee creation.
 - iii. Action Item: Motion to create the transition subcommittee for the CEO position.

Motion first by Otis, second by Hall.

Yeas: Brady, Brock, Hahn, Hall, Hoeger, Kuhn, Miller, Otis, Shelton, Thommes, Ward, Motion carried.

VIII. Adjourn at 7:46 PM.

- *Closed Session: If, during the course of the meeting, discussion of any item on the agenda should be held in a closed meeting, the council will conduct a closed meeting in accordance with the Nebraska Open Meetings Law.
- **Sequence of Agenda: The sequence of agenda topics is subject to change at the discretion of the Council. Please arrive at the beginning of the meeting.

UPCOMING LEARNING COMMUNITY EVENTS:

Advisory Committee To Be Determined

LC Coordinating Council October 19th, 2023, 6:00 PM

Subcouncil #1 To Be Determined

Subcouncil #2 To Be Determined

Subcouncil #3 To Be Determined Subcouncil #4 To Be Determined

Subcouncil #5 To Be Determined

Subcouncil #6 To Be Determined

HANDOUTS TO ACCOMPANY THIS AGENDA ARE AS FOLLOW

- LCCC Minutes dated September 7th, 2023
- August Treasurer's Report dated August 31st, 2023
- CEO Report
- Center Updates

LEARNING COMMUNITY OF DOUGLAS SARPY COUNTIES Treasurer's Report Sep 30, 2023

9/1/23 6282 9/1/23 6269 8/1/23 3807 9/5/23	Accident Fund All Copy Products Buffett Early Childhood Institute	1000554116 AR4063139 LCYR2-082023Eval	AF Worker's Comp Premium Accident Fund Monthly Maintenance for Admin Area Monthly Maintenance for Parent University All Copy Products August 2023 Supt Plan Eval	741.75 49.24 85.84	741.75 Paid In Full 135.08 Paid In Full
9/1/23 6269 8/1/23 3807 9/5/23			Monthly Maintenance for Admin Area Monthly Maintenance for Parent University All Copy Products		
8/1/23 3807 9/5/23			Monthly Maintenance for Parent University All Copy Products		135 08 Paid In Evil
8/1/23 3807 9/5/23		LCYR2-082023Eval	Monthly Maintenance for Parent University All Copy Products		135 08 Paid In Full
8/1/23 3807 9/5/23	Buffett Early Childhood Institute	LCYR2-082023Eval			135 08 Paid In Full
3807 9/5/23	Buffett Early Childhood Institute	LCYR2-082023Eval	August 2023 Sunt Plan Eval		133.00 Faiu iii Fuii
9/5/23	·		August 2020 Supt Flatt Eval	72,254.66	
9/5/23			Less BECI contribution- \$225,000	-1,159.90	
			Buffett Early Childhood Institute		71,094.76 Paid In Full
6291	Buffett Early Childhood Institute	LCYR2-082023Supes	August 2023 Monthly Program Payment	210,401.03	
6291			Year 2 25% of residual	-14,939.07	
			Buffett Early Childhood Institute		195,461.96 Paid In Full
9/6/23	Blue Cross Blue Shield of Nebraska	3377902	September Health & Dental (Admin)	6,551.27	
			September Health & Dental (PU Staff)	13,752.39	
			September Health & Dental (ELC Dir)	2,468.98	
6296			Blue Cross Blue Shield of Nebraska		22,772.64 Paid In Full
9/12/23	City of Omaha	236134	DEBRA PARIS August 2023	3,503.52	
			PAYROLL/BENEFITS		
6292			City of Omaha		3,503.52 Paid In Full
9/1/23	Clarity Benefit Solutions	2309014474	August Administration Monthly Fee	27.82	
			MED and DCA	50.14	
6270			Clarity Benefit Solutions		77.96 Paid In Full
9/2/23	Claudia Salazar	201	Deep cleaning/Disinfecting Services	200.00	
6271			Claudia Salazar		200.00 Paid In Full
8/1/23	Colonial Life	38841520801743	Monthly Short-Term Disability Insurance Premium	449.65	
			Pymt - LC ADMIN Staff	420.00	
			Monthly Short-Term Disability Insurance Premium Pymt - ELC Director Staff	138.00	
			Monthly Short-Term Disability Insurance Premium	972.95	
			Pymt - Parent University Staff		
6272			Colonial Life		1,560.60 Paid In Full
9/1/23	Colonial Life	38841520901715	Monthly Short-Term Disability Insurance Premium	449.65	
			Pymt - LC ADMIN Staff	120.00	
			Monthly Short-Term Disability Insurance Premium Pymt - ELC Director Staff	138.00	
			Monthly Short-Term Disability Insurance Premium	972.95	
			Pymt - Parent University Staff	0.2.00	
6306			Colonial Life		1,560.60 Paid In Full
8/31/23	Completely KIDS	20230831-LC	August Contract billing for Field Club Elementary	7,742.00	
6293			Completely KIDS		7,742.00 Paid In Full

Treasurer's Report Sep 30, 2023

Check# Date	Name	Invoice/CM #	Line Description	Debit Amount	Credit Amount Payment Status
9/17/23	Control Yours	6561	Control Yours Plus Membership Subscription for LCC	192.50	
6288			Control Yours		192.50 Paid In Full
8/31/23	Culligan of Omaha	1080325	EQUIPMENT - COOLER (Admin Office 28A). from 09/01 to 09/30	13.50	
			Equipment - POU With Filter (Admin Office 28A) from 09/01 to 09/30	65.00	
6274			Culligan of Omaha		78.50 Paid In Full
8/31/23	Culligan of Omaha	1080454	EQUIPMENT - COOLER For Serv., from 09/01 to 09/30 P/O Nbr. ASCENT 80:	6.50	
			Equipment - POU With Filter For Serv, from 09/01 to 09/30	65.00	
6275			Culligan of Omaha		71.50 Paid In Full
9/20/23	Datashield	0121548	Onsite Shredding Cart	54.00	54 00 Deid le Full
5301			Datashield		54.00 Paid In Full
9/6/23 1511	El Mero Mero Inc	1860	September 2023 Lease Payment El Mero Mero Inc	5,582.00	5,582.00 Paid In Full
9/1/23	EMSPACE, INC	90962	Account Service & Consulting		
			Media Outreach & Management Website Updates	1,787.50	
			Digital Annual Report & Misc Communications		
6290			Social Media Management EMSPACE, INC	895.98	2,683.48 Paid In Full
9/6/23	HiTouch	7614524608-0-1	NON-DAIRY CREAMER 12 OZ 3 PK	8.63	
			DURACELL COPPERTOP AA16 DBLWD	20.46	
			DURACELL COPPERTOP AAA16 DBLWD	20.46	
			DART 12OZ FOAM CUP 25PK	4.55	
9/7/23	HiTouch	7614647819-0-1	SPLS QKSTRT LGDIS 48MMX50M 4PK	20.34	
			BROTHER DR221CL DRUM UNIT	141.57	
6277			STAPLES 8.5X11 COPY CS HiTouch	55.99	272.00 Paid In Full
9/11/23	HiTouch	7614647819-0-2	TN221 CMYK TONER SET	522.92	
6284		761.161.161.616	HiTouch	012.01	522.92 Paid In Full
9/15/23	HiTouch	7615101423-0-1	FRAME 04444 HANGING FOLDER	38.02	
6299			NESTLE PURE LIFE 8OZ 24/CT HiTouch	19.54	E7 EC Daid In Full
6299			niioucii		57.56 Paid In Full
9/18/23	HiTouch	7615169994-0-1	KCUP SWISS MISS HOT CHOC 44CT	29.99	
			TISSUE FACIAL BOUTIQ 6/PK	14.84	
6302			KCUP TWININGS LEMON & GINGER HITouch	14.79	59.62 Paid In Full
0302			50011		JJ.U£ Falu III Full
9/11/23	HyVee Accounts Receivable	4863117322	Food Purchases PU Parent/Child Classes	364.55	

Treasurer's Report Sep 30, 2023

Check# Date	Name	Invoice/CM #	Line Description	Debit Amount	
6286			HyVee Accounts Receivable		364.55 Paid In Full
9/1/23	InfiNet Solutions, Inc.	65819ISI	Monthly Managed Services September 2023	3,214.75	
6295			InfiNet Solutions, Inc.		3,214.75 Paid In Full
9/27/23	InfiNet Solutions, Inc.	66038IS1	ThinkPad E14 Gen 5 Intel (14) - Arctic Grey - 13th	1,040.00	
			Generation Intel(rCoreM 15-1335U Processor (E-Co		
6310			InfiNet Solutions, Inc.		1,040.00 Paid In Full
9/15/23	Jensen Rogert Associates, Inc.	2023-10	October 2023 Installment	2,500.00	
6297			Jensen Rogert Associates, Inc.		2,500.00 Paid In Full
9/10/23	Koley Jessen PC LLO	473128	Elementary Learning Center Contracts: Professional Services	1,778.00	
9/10/23	Koley Jessen PC LLO	473129	Personnel Matters: Professional Services	2,225.50	
9/10/23	Koley Jessen PC LLO	473130	Professional Services: Monthly Community Council Meetings	1,125.00	
9/10/23	Koley Jessen PC LLO	473131	General: Professional Services	47.00	
6300			Koley Jessen PC LLO		5,175.50 Paid In Full
8/5/23	Lion's Gate Security Solutions	LCJUL2023	Security Services - July 12, 19, 26,27	288.00	
6278			Lion's Gate Security Solutions		288.00 Paid In Full
9/20/23	Millard Public Schools	MPS092023-2	ELC Literacy Instructional coaching 22/23	95,054.00	
6305			payment Millard Public Schools		95,054.00 Paid In Full
8/23/23	Nebraska Association of School Boards	48367	Tonya Ward - 2023 Area Membership Meeting La Vista	110.00	
6279			Nebraska Association of School Boards		110.00 Paid In Full
8/28/23	Occupational Health Centers of NE	257353614	Employment testing- Engalow, Jawahir	68.00	
6273			Occupational Health Centers of NE		68.00 Paid In Full
9/15/23	OMAHA PUBLIC SCHOOLS	BECI017	July 01, 2023-July 31, 2023 BECI Payment-: Liberty	10,630.32	
			July 01, 2023-July 31, 2023 BECI Payment-: Pinewood	18,261.80	
9/15/23	OMAHA PUBLIC SCHOOLS	Jul1-July312023 ELC	InstructionalCoaches #SC1	30,142.97	
			InstructionalCoaches #SC3 ELC Partnership Program	15,398.45 18,931.14	
6298			OMAHA PUBLIC SCHOOLS	10,001.11	93,364.68 Paid In Full
9/5/23	Peopleready	28295111	PU Childcare Workers 8/28-9/3/2023	551.20	
9/12/23	Peopleready	28300864	PU Childcare Workers 9/4-9/10/2023	440.96	
6304			Peopleready		992.16 Paid In Full
9/19/23	Peopleready	28313599	PU Childcare Workers 9/11-9/17/2023	1,653.60	
			Peopleready		1,653.60 Paid In Full

10/6/2023 at 5:59 PM

Treasurer's Report Sep 30, 2023

Check# Date	Name	Invoice/CM #	Line Description	Debit Amount	Credit Amount Payment Status
9/14/23	PINC PROFESSIONAL INTERPRETER & TRANSLA	2023100	Simultaneous Interpreting Services: Leading with Love and Strength Date of Service: Sept 12, 2023	206.25	,
6289			Mileage Source IRS - 2022-13 June 9, 2022 PINC PROFESSIONAL INTERPRETER & TRANSLA		206.25 Paid In Full
9/22/23	PINC PROFESSIONAL INTERPRETER & TRANSLA	2023104	Simultaneous Interpreting Services: Leading with Love and Strength Date of Service: Sept 19, 2023	180.00	
6308			Mileage Source IRS - 2022-13 June 9, 2022 PINC PROFESSIONAL INTERPRETER & TRANSLA	26.25	206.25 Paid In Full
9/1/23 6280	Regal Printing CO	93881	Sharon Barnett Business Cards Regal Printing CO	77.50	77.50 Paid In Full
8/21/23 6281	Sun Life Assurance Company of Canada	October 2023	Employee Life (EE LIF, AD&D, LTD Admin) Sun Life Assurance Company of Canada	114.70	114.70 Paid In Full
9/11/23 6294	Teaching Strategies, LLC	Q-271270	ReadyRosie Classroom Resources Teaching Strategies, LLC	2,450.00	2,450.00 Paid In Full
9/5/23	The Daily Record	155989	Notice of Budget Hearings- 9/7/23 5:00pm & 5:15PM	227.60	
9/8/23 6283	The Daily Record	156155	Notice of Budget Hearings- 9/7/23 5:00pm & 5:15PM (Corrected Notice) The Daily Record	211.60	439.20 Paid In Full
9/5/23 6276	The Daily Record	155990	Notice of Mtg-Coordinating Council- 9/7/23 The Daily Record	22.80	22.80 Paid In Full
9/26/23 6307	The Daily Record	156701	Notice of Mtg-Coordinating Council- 9/28/23 The Daily Record	22.16	22.16 Paid In Full
9/13/23 6285	UNO Executive Education Program	2721	Fall Executive & Professional Development-Itzeni Lopez UNO Executive Education Program	1,999.00	1,999.00 Paid In Full
	VCD Incomerce Co	040044005	•	440.04	1,333.00 Faid III Fuii
9/19/23 9/19/23 6309	VSP Insurance Co. VSP Insurance Co.	818841285 818841290	September 2023 October 2023-Cobra Pmt VSP Insurance Co.	110.61 9.22	119.83 Paid In Full
9/1/23	X-eqt	IN0004963	PU Application Development PU Project Management	262.50 150.00	
6287			X-eqt		412.50 Paid In Full

10/6/2023 at 5:59 PM

Treasurer's Report Sep 30, 2023

Check# Date	Name	Invoice/CM #	Line Description	Debit Amount	Credit Amount Payment Status
			_	541,328.62	541,328.62

10/6/2023 at 5:59 PM

LEARNING COMMUNITY OF DOUGLAS & SARPY

Credit Card Report Aug 31, 2023

Date	Reference	Trans Description	Debit Amt Credit An	nt Balance
8/1/23		Beginning Balance		-17,891.86
8/2/23	CC082023_L01	Quadient CXM USA, Inc	65.0	0
8/2/23	CC082023_L02	Quadient CXM USA, Inc	101.5	0
8/2/23	CC082023_V01	Greater Omaha Refrigeration	310.8	5
8/2/23	CC082023_N06	Target	9.7	5
8/3/23	CC082023_N07	Office Depot, Inc.	21.8	2
8/3/23	CC082023_N08	Office Depot, Inc.	13.9	
8/3/23	CC082023_N09	Office Depot, Inc.	211.7	1
8/3/23	CC082023_N10	Office Depot, Inc.	627.2	2
8/8/23	CC082023_L03	T-Mobile	617.5	6
8/9/23	CC082023_N01	WebstaurantStore	236.12	
8/10/23	CC082023_V02	Sage Software	362.0	0
8/10/23	CC082023_N11	Amazon.com	246.0	5
8/10/23	CC082023_N12	Amazon.com	36.7	9
8/10/23	CC082023_N13	Amazon.com	139.0	8
8/10/23	CC082023_N14	Amazon.com	12.3	6
8/10/23	CC082023_N15	Amazon.com	855.9	6
8/11/23	CC082023_N16	Amazon.com	85.5	8
8/11/23	CC082023_N17	Amazon.com	139.0 12.3 855.9 85.5 14.7 574.1 299.5 102.7 659.9	
8/11/23	CC082023_N18	Amazon.com	574.1	
8/17/23	CC082023_N19	Target	299.5	
8/17/23	CC082023_N20	Target	102.7	
8/17/23	CC082023_N21	Sam's Club	659.9	
8/18/23	CC082023_L04	Quadient CXM USA, Inc	101.5	
8/18/23	CC082023_V03	Zoom Video Communication, Inc.	199.9	
8/18/23	CC082023_V04	Expedia	205.9	
8/18/23	CC082023_N22	Target	8.5	
8/18/23	CC082023_N23	Target	8.5	
8/19/23	CC082023_N24	Amazon.com	12.7	
8/19/23	CC082023_N25	Amazon.com	103.6	
8/20/23	CC082023_N27	Amazon.com	51.2	
8/20/23	CC082023_N28	Amazon.com	259.0	
8/20/23	CC082023_N29	Amazon.com	114.4	
8/20/23	CC082023_N30	Amazon.com	12.8	
8/20/23	CC082023_N31	Amazon.com	284.0	3
8/21/23	CC082023_N02	Target	299.56	
8/21/23	CC082023_N26	Amazon.com	86.88	
8/21/23	CC082023_N32	Amazon.com	677.4	
8/21/23	CC082023_N33	Sam's Club	503.8	
8/21/23	CC082023_N34	Target	228.9	
8/21/23	CC082023_N35	Target	22.4	
8/21/23	CC082023_N36	Amazon.com	34.2	
8/21/23	CC082023_N37	Amazon.com	251.7	
8/21/23	CC082023_N38	UNL - College of Education	350.0	0

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Date	Reference	Trans Description	Debit Amt	Credit Amt	Balance	
8/23/23	CC082023_V05	Greater Omaha Refrigeration		1,711.00		
8/24/23	CC082023_N03	Target	22.47			
8/24/23	CC082023_N04	Office Depot, Inc.		42.78		
8/24/23	CC082023_N05	Target		63.11		
8/25/23	CC082023_V06	Stamps.com		19.99		
8/25/23	CC082023_N39	Target		28.00		
8/25/23	CC082023_N40	Target		168.95		
8/25/23	CC082023_N41	Sam's Club		40.22		
8/25/23	CC082023_N42	Bounce Ninja		738.00		
8/25/23	CC082023_N43	Amazon.com		25.70		
8/25/23	CC082023_N44	Amazon.com		252.49		
8/25/23	CC082023_N45	familyfirst		080.00		
8/27/23	CC082023_V07	Amazon.com		203.54		
8/27/23	CC082023_N46	Amazon.com		1,210.19		
8/27/23	CC082023_N47	Amazon.com	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	657.28		
8/28/23	082823EFT	Security National Bank - Credit Card Payable-SNB	17,891.86			
8/28/23	CC082023_V08	Amazon.com	\sim \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \	28.08		
8/28/23	CC082023_N48	Amazon.com	Oli	360.22		
8/28/23	CC082023_N49	Amazon.com		254.66		
8/28/23	CC082023_N50	Office Depot, Inc.	()	40.14		
8/28/23	CC082023_N51	Office Depot, Inc.		16.59		
8/28/23	CC082023_N52	Office Depot, Inc.		5.65		
8/28/23	CC082023_N53	Office Depot, Inc.		162.86		
8/28/23	CC082023_N54	Office Depot, Inc.		54.96		
8/28/23	CC082023_N55	Office Depot, Inc.		6.99		
8/28/23	CC082023_N56	Neveria El Buen Sabor		400.00		
8/29/23	CC082023_L05	Vornado Air, LLC		934.67		
8/29/23	CC082023_V09	1&1 lonos		8.71		
8/29/23	CC082023_N57	Bounce Ninja		100.00		
8/31/23	CC082023_V10	Amazon.com		65.61		
		Current Period Change	18,450.01	17,566.39	883.62	
8/31/23		Ending Balance			-17,008.24	

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LEARNING COMMUNITY OF DOUGLAS SARPY COUNTIES Credit Card Report Sep 30, 2023

Date	Reference	Trans Description	Debit Amt	Credit Amt	Balance
9/1/23		Beginning Balance			-17,008.24
9/1/23	CC092023_L01	Quadient CXM USA, Inc		65.00	
9/1/23	CC092023_L02	Quadient CXM USA, Inc		92.75	
9/1/23	CC092023_N02	Dalicia Taco Truck		944.00	
9/1/23	CC092023_N03	Target		145.98	
9/3/23	CC092023_L03	T-Mobile		617.56	
9/3/23	CC092023_V01	Sage Software		362.00	
9/3/23	CC092023_V02	Greater Omaha Refrigeration		189.00	
9/6/23	CC092023_N04	Sam's Club		210.28	
9/7/23	CC092023_V03	Amazon.com		29.71	
9/7/23	CC092023_N05	Amazon.com		12.83	
9/7/23	CC092023_N06	Amazon.com		31.87	
9/8/23	CC092023_V04	Panera Bread Cafe 1202		412.02	
9/8/23	CC092023_N08	Sam's Club		721.88	
9/8/23	CC092023_N09	Amazon.com		148.25	
9/9/23	CC092023_V05	Somebody With A Truck, LLC		100.00	
9/9/23	CC092023_V06	Somebody With A Truck, LLC		125.00	
9/9/23	CC092023_N07	Amazon.com		138.03	
9/12/23	CC092023_N10	Little Caesars		86.77	
9/13/23	CC092023_N11	HyVee Accounts Receivable		56.33	
9/15/23	CC092023_V07	Herman Miller		2,060.84	
9/17/23	CC092023_V08	Zoom Video Communication, Inc.		199.90	
9/19/23	CC092023_V11	1&1 lonos		8.71	
9/19/23	CC092023_N12	Target		81.78	
9/19/23	CC092023_N13	Amazon.com		115.25	
9/20/23	CC092023_N14	Amazon.com		32.09	
9/20/23	CC092023_N15	Target		48.94	
9/20/23	CC092023_N16	Amazon.com		263.42	
9/20/23	CC092023_N17	Amazon.com		27.21	
9/21/23	CC092023_L04	National Association of Black		200.00	
9/21/23	CC092023_N18	Amazon.com		427.98	
9/21/23	CC092023_N19	Target		20.34	
9/22/23	CC092023_L05	Institute of Management Accoun		260.00	
9/22/23	CC092023_N01	Target	1.59		
9/24/23	CC092023_V09	Stamps.com		19.99	
9/24/23	CC092023_V10	Amazon.com		123.88	
9/26/23	CC092023_N20	Little Caesars		146.02	
9/26/23	CC092023_N21	Amazon.com		28.59	
9/26/23	CC092023_N22	Amazon.com		23.50	
9/27/23	092723EFT	Security National Bank - Credit Card Payable-SNE	17,008.24		

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LEARNING COMMUNITY OF DOUGLAS SARPY COUNTIES Credit Card Report Sep 30, 2023

Date	Reference	Trans Description	Debit Amt	Credit Amt	Balance
9/27/23	CC092023_N23	Amazon.com		49.98	
9/27/23	CC092023_N24	Little Caesars		39.74	
9/28/23	CC092023_N25	Amazon.com		197.76	
		Current Period Change	17,009.83	8,865.18	8,144.65
9/30/23		Ending Balance			-8,863.59

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Budget to Actual - General Administration For the Twelve Months Ending August 31, 2023

_	Current FY Budget	Actual YTD	Percent of Budget	Remaining Spent
Revenues State Aid Interest - Main OP	\$ 470,000.00 5,000.00	\$ 470,000.00 389,075.74	100.00 7,781.51	0.00 (384,075.74)
Total Revenues	475,000.00	859,075.74	180.86	(384,075.74)
General Expenses				
Coordinating Council	4.7.000.00	20.020.42	20121	(1.7.000.40)
LCCC-CONTRACTED SERVICES	15,000.00	30,938.43	206.26	(15,938.43)
LCCC-OTHER PROF/TECH	5,000.00	2,882.71	57.65	2,117.29
LCCC - ADVERTISING	800.00	1,017.92	127.24	(217.92)
LCCC -PRINTING	250.00	0.00	0.00	250.00
LCCC - OFFICE SUPPLIES	150.00	1,169.77	779.85	(1,019.77)
LCCC- TECHNOLOGY/EQUIPMENT LCCC - CONFERENCE REGISTRATI	150.00	75.00 97.00	50.00 3.88	75.00
LCCC - CONFERENCE REGISTRATI LCCC - MISC EXPENSES	2,500.00	566.56	3.88 87.16	2,403.00 83.44
LCCC - MISC EXPENSES	650.00	300.30	87.10	83.44
Coordinating Council - Subtotal	24,500.00	36,747.39	149.99	(12,247.39)
Administration				
CEO SALARY	99,618.79	93,890.65	94.25	5,728.14
OTHER SALARIES AND WAGES	170,501.74	160,697.90	94.25	9,803.84
PAYROLL TAXES	20,664.22	19,441.53	94.08	1,222.69
BENEFIT EXPENSES	55,703.62	55,746.07	100.08	(42.45)
DUES AND MEMBERSHIPS	4,800.00	6,575.00	136.98	(1,775.00)
CONFERENCE/PROFESSIONAL DEV	6,300.00	3,120.35	49.53	3,179.65
PUBLIC ACCOUNTING	40,000.00	28,066.00	70.17	11,934.00
STATE AUDIT	12,000.00	0.00	0.00	12,000.00
TELECOMMUNICATIONS/WEBSITE	2,200.00	2,336.25	106.19	(136.25)
SUPPLIES	6,000.00	4,911.33	81.86	1,088.67
FURNITURE	2,500.00	2,530.95	101.24	(30.95)
PRINTING AND POSTAGE	3,500.00	4,031.21	115.18	(531.21)
TECHNOLOGY/EQUIPMENT	31,500.00	33,614.66	106.71	(2,114.66)
REIMBURSED EXPENSES	0.00	77.94	0.00	(77.94)
OTHER MISC.	9,100.00	12,997.47	142.83	(3,897.47)
Administration - Subtotal	464,388.37	428,037.31	92.17	36,351.06
Total Expenses	488,888.37	464,784.70	95.07	24,103.67
Net Income	\$ (13,888.37)	\$ 394,291.04	2,839.00	(408,179.41)

Budget to Actual - ELC Operations For the Twelve Months Ending August 31, 2023

	Current FY Budget		Actual YTD	Percent of Spent	Remaining
Revenues					
LOC PROP TAX - ELC LEVY \$	11,803,669.58	\$	11,863,201.76	100.50	(59,532.18)
INTEREST - ELC OP	5,000.00		117,657.76	2,353.16	(112,657.76)
Total Revenues	11,808,669.58	•	11,980,859.52	101.46	(172,189.94)
General Expenses					
District Initiatives					
Subcouncil 1 ELC Programming	171,146.00		44,664.09	26.10	126,481.91
Subcouncil 3 ELC Programming	315,270.00		347,595.62	110.25	(32,325.62)
Subcouncil 4 ELC Programming	178,135.00		82,964.46	46.57	95,170.54
Subcouncil 5 ELC Programming	309,000.00		309,000.00	100.00	0.00
Subcouncil 6 ELC Programming	107,949.00		161,336.49	149.46	(53,387.49)
Programming - Subtotal	1,081,500.00		945,560.66	87.43	135,939.34
North Omaha Center					
Early Childhood Partnership	902,796.45		316,975.17	35.11	585,821.28
Subcouncil 2 Family Support Li	0.00		0.00	0.00	0.00
Childcare Director Training	141,500.00		2,087.50	1.48	139,412.50
Parent University	1,616,979.00		1,256,597.55	77.71	360,381.45
Center Operations	75,987.84		39,302.38	51.72	36,685.46
North Omaha Center - Subtotal	3,818,763.29		2,560,523.26	67.05	1,258,240.03
South Omaha Center					
South Omaha Center	2,474,542.00		1,587,661.00	64.16	886,881.00
Subcouncil 5 Family Support Li	0.00		0.00	0.00	0.00
South Omaha Center - Subtotal	2,474,542.00		1,587,661.00	64.16	886,881.00
Superintendent's Early Childhood Plan					
Superintendent's Early Childho	3,358,000.00		2,777,437.18	82.71	580,562.82
Superintendent's Plan - Subtotal	3,358,000.00		2,777,437.18	82.71	580,562.82
General Expenses					
Admin-Community Relations	90,000.00		122,730.99	136.37	(32,730.99)
Admin-Legal	80,000.00		71,944.06	89.93	8,055.94
Admin-Insurance/Bonding	75,000.00		85,019.49	113.36	(10,019.49)
Admin-Lobbying	36,000.00		30,116.67	83.66	5,883.33
Admin-Salaries and Wages	430,767.77		231,922.92	53.84	198,844.85
Admin-Payroll Taxes	25,303.50		17,117.75	67.65	8,185.75
Admin-Benefit Expenses	53,715.22		59,046.33	109.92	(5,331.11)
Admin-Other Misc. Expenses	11,650.00		2,775.88	23.83	8,874.12
General Expenses - Subtotal	802,436.49		620,674.09	77.35	181,762.40
Total Expenses	10,453,741.78		7,546,295.53	72.19	2,907,446.25
Difference of Revenues & Expenses	(1,354,927.80)		(4,434,563.99)	327.29	3,079,636.19
Net Income \$	1,354,927.80	\$	4,434,563.99	(327.29)	(3,079,636.19)

Budget to Actual - Capital Projects For the Twelve Months Ending August 31, 2023

		Current FY Budget	Actual YTD	Percent of Budget	Remaining Spent
Revenues					
LOC PROP TAX - CAP PROJ (1070)	\$ -	991,701.00	\$ 1,000,514.53	100.89	(8,813.53)
Total Revenues	-	991,701.00	1,000,514.53	100.89	(8,813.53)
Learning Centers					
North Omaha Center - Lease Pay		630,000.00	688,086.64	109.22	(58,086.64)
South Omaha Center - Lease Pay		226,924.00	242,736.11	106.97	(15,812.11)
South Omaha Satellite-Center -		44,000.00	16,547.44	37.61	27,452.56
West Omaha-Center - Lease Paym	_	98,121.00	1,620.00	1.65	96,501.00
Total Expenses	_	999,045.00	948,990.19	94.99	50,054.81
Difference of Revenues & Expenses	\$	(7,344.00)	\$ 51,524.34	701.58	(58,868.34)

For Management Purposes Only

LEARNING COMMUNITY OF DOUGLAS & SARPY COUNTIES

Budget to Actual - Research & Evaluation For the Twelve Months Ending August 31, 2023

		Current FY Budget		Actual YTD	Percent of Budget	Remaining Spent
Revenues		Budget			Budget	Speni
	\$	706,910.00	\$	706,910.00	100.00	0.00
Interest	_	0.00	_	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Revenues	_	706,910.00	_	706,910.00	100.00	0.00
Research & Evaluation						
Program Evaluation & Research		451,975.00		448,112.62	99.15	3,862.38
GOALS Student Attendance Initi		62,500.00		62,500.00	100.00	0.00
Superintendent's Plan Evaluati	_	225,000.00	_	153,696.08	68.31	71,303.92
Total Expenses	_	739,475.00	_	664,308.70	89.84	75,166.30
Difference of Revenues & Expenses	\$ _	(32,565.00)	\$ =	42,601.30	130.82	(75,166.30)

LEARNING COMMUNITY CENTER OF NORTH OMAHA

9/21/2023 to 10/11/2023

General Information

- Workforce Development, GED, and ESL classes are making continued progress.
- We've launched the UNO College Seminar Class in collaboration with UNO, introducing families to post-secondary education for themselves or their children.
- Our Expressive Art Group Therapy for Children began on September 27th, with 22 children participating in three groups.
- The String Sprout program, a partnership with the Omaha Conservatory of Music, now boasts four full classes.
- "Mujeres y Valores," a class empowering Spanish-speaking mothers, commenced in September and concluded on October 10th.
- We now offer "Common Sense Parenting" in Karen for our Karen parents.
- "Leading with Love and Strength," a leadership class helping parents gain insight into their strengths for more effective parenting and leadership, began on September 12th and continues.
- We are actively exploring more partnerships with schools and community organizations, including ABIDE, BRIDGE, Heartland Workers Center, Heartland Workforce Solutions, NCFL, Charles Drew, UNO, and Creighton.

Staff Training

• Educational Navigators – DHHS Waiver, Connection's Referral Process for Therapy

Success Stories

- 1) One of our participants in our ESL program was able to take her citizenship test and passed.
- 2) Parent University proudly introduces the "Mujeres y Valores" class, aimed at empowering Spanish-speaking mothers as advocates for themselves and their children. This innovative initiative facilitates interaction with community leaders, business owners, and fellow mothers to enhance knowledge, skills, and self-advocacy abilities. Instructors provide valuable knowledge to strengthen understanding of societal dynamics, rights, and protection mechanisms. The program equips parents with lasting tools to advocate for themselves and meet their children's needs effectively. The first cohort will graduate on October 10, 2023. One parent reported the class empowered her to develop a better relationship with her child's teacher to better advocate for her kid.

Pictures from Mujeres y Valores Graduation:



LEARNING COMMUNITY CENTER OF SOUTH OMAHA

9/21/23-10/12/23

General Information

- Service Learning program with UNO Spanish class included an event at UNO
- Volunteers from Creighton Center for Service and Justice provided parent-teacher conference practice in ESL classes
- Visit from a Creighton English class provided additional conference role play in ESL classes
- International UNO students present and practice conversation in an intermediate ESL class.
- Individual therapy sessions for center families on Wednesdays and Thursdays (no cost to LC)
- Met with three OPS principals two of them toured at the LCCSO, and Nayeli and Anne visited one school
- OneWorld held its board meeting at the LCCSO, which included a tour.
- Attended the Bridge meeting to learn about hosting Community Cafes at the LCCSO)
- 49 flu shots provided to parent participants by OneWorld nurses.
- Annual meeting with Nebraska Diaper Bank; continue to give diapers out to all parent participants who need them.

Summer Programming

- Parent/Child Programming
 - o ESL for Parents (11 cohorts, twice a week for 2-3 hours during June)
 - o GED for Parents (2 cohorts, twice a week for 3 hours during June)
 - Parent Workshops once every two weeks include:
 - Nurturing Parenting (LCCSO staff)
 - Pyramid Model (Child Saving Institute)
 - Opening Doors (Catholic Charities)
 - Workforce Development (Metro CC)
 - Circle of Security (LCCSO staff)
 - Darkness to Light (Project Harmony)
 - Early Childhood Guidelines (LCCSO staff)
 - Baby and Me in Q'anjob'al language (LCCSO staff)
 - Child Learning programming during parent classes
 - Regular programming for children aged 0-5
 - Farm to School programming through The Big Garden
 - Opera Omaha provided programming for kids in the child learning classroom
 - Lil' Rosies programming through the Rose Theater
 - o Interactive Parent/Child Programming
 - Home visits are scheduled approximately every three to four weeks
 - Prime Time Family Reading on Tuesdays and Thursdays
 - String Sprouts violin classes on Wednesdays during the day and evening
- Community Childcare training/coaching for South Omaha providers
 - o Rooted in Relationships program one Saturday a month

- o 16 childcare providers receiving monthly coaching on improving quality
- Staff from the State of Nebraska's Step Up to Quality visited the center to discuss partnership.

Success Story

The UNO College Prep program began in 2014 as a partnership between the UNO Service Learning Academy, the UNO Teacher Education Department, and the Learning Community Center of South Omaha. This program provides teacher candidates an opportunity to practice working with families and LCCSO families with information and experience about college. During the six-week course, families visit the library, classrooms, and dorms and eat in the cafeteria with UNO students. The teacher candidates cater their tours to the families – for example if a child is interested in science, they visit the science building. Below are the numbers of UNO teacher candidates and LCCSO families who have attended each semester. Please note that some families attended the program more than once, so this total number includes some duplication.

Date	UNO Course	# of UNO Students	# of LCC Children	# LCCSO Parents
Fall 2014	Teacher Education Department 4000/8006	18	37	15
Spring 2015	Teacher Education Department 3050/8055	30	27	16
Fall 2015	Teacher Education Department 3050/8055	18	36	16
Spring 2016	Teacher Education Department 3050/8055	19	36	18
Fall 2016	Teacher Education Department 3000	23	41	17
Spring 2017	Teacher Education Department 3000	24	29	18
Fall 2017	Teacher Education Department 2050	24	49	16
Spring 2018	Teacher Education Department 2050	23	49	17
Spring 2018	Teacher Education Department 2050	25	39	13
Fall 2018	Teacher Education Department 2050	25	34	16
Fall 2018	Teacher Education Department 2050	22	36	18
Spring 2019	Teacher Education Department 2050	30	36	13
Spring 2019	Teacher Education Department 2050	22	33	13
Fall 2019	Teacher Education Department 2050	23	41	16
Fall 2019	Teacher Education Department 2050	22	40	14
Spring 2020-Hybrid	Teacher Education Department 2050	29	46	16
Spring 2020-Hybrid	Teacher Education Department 2050	25	33	13

Fall 2020-Online	Teacher Education Department 2050	22	34	14
Fall 2020- Online	Teacher Education Department 2050	17	20	9
Spring 2021-Online	Teacher Education Department 2050	19	35	14
Spring 2021-Online	Teacher Education Department 2050	15	26	12
Fall 2021-Online	Teacher Education Department 2050	20	25	10
Fall 2021-Online	Teacher Education Department 2050	21	21	12
Spring 2022-Hybrid	Teacher Education Department 2050	10	11	5
Spring 2022-Hybrid	Teacher Education Department 2050	6	14	5
Fall 2022	Teacher Education Department 2050	18	24	10
Fall 2022	Teacher Education Department 2050	7	17	7
Spring 2023	Teacher Education Department 2050	7	17	7
Spring 2023	Teacher Education Department 2050	19	36	26
Fall 2023	Teacher Education Department 2050	10	31	11
Total		593	953	407



learning community center of NORTH OMAHA













Mission:

Together with school districts and community partners, we demonstrate, share, and implement more effective practices to measurably improve educational outcomes for children and families in poverty.

TWO-GENERATION (#2GEN) APPROACHES CENTER WHOLE FAMILIES











CHILD-FOCUSED

CHILD-FOCUSED WITH PARENT & CAREGIVER ELEMENTS

This could include early childhood development with parenting skills; family literacy with health screenings; and/or other child-focused services that also identify ways to support the adults in their lives.

WHOLE FAMILY

Two-generation (2Gen) approaches build family well-being by intentionally and simultaneously working with children and the adults in their lives together.

PARENT- & CAREGIVER-FOCUSED WITH CHILD ELEMENTS

This could include workforce programs offering child care referrals; food and nutrition supports for student parents: and/or other adult-focused services that also identify ways to support their role as parents or caregivers.

ADULT-FOCUSED

Program Operation (Holistic Support)

- √ Emphasize Early Childhood Focus
- ✓Offer Courses to promote Growth and Stability (ESL, GED, WFD)
- ✓ Provide Parenting, Life Skills, Leadership, and Health and Wellness Classes
- **√** Home Visits

Parent University Experience

- 1) Orientation at the Start of Each Term
- 2) Morning Classes (Monday to Thursday from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM)
 - A. Transportation start at 8:00 AM
 - B. Families get settled from 8:30 AM to 9:00 AM
- 3) Evening Classes (Monday to Thursday from 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM)
 - A. Transportation start at 5:00 PM
 - B. Families get settled and have dinner from 5:30 PM to 6:00 PM
- 4) Library services are available before, during, and after classes
- 5) Evening tutoring and reading support for school-age children occur while parents are attending evening classes
- 6) Childcare is always available while parents attend classes
- 7) Individualized and tailored case management

Testimonies

"The Center has been a big support to our life. It has helped us to learn to work with our children. We have received many different community resources along with sharing our culture and experiences with other participants while learning about the culture and experiences of other as well." – Lorena Camargo (10/11/2023)





"I love to learn, and the center has been the place where I continue growing my English skills at a steady pace. I have learned to advocate for myself and helped my grandson by using all the information that I have received." – Balbina Nicolas (10/11/2023)

"The program is amazing! I have done so many classes, and they have so much to offer to the community." – Sunshine (10/11/2023)

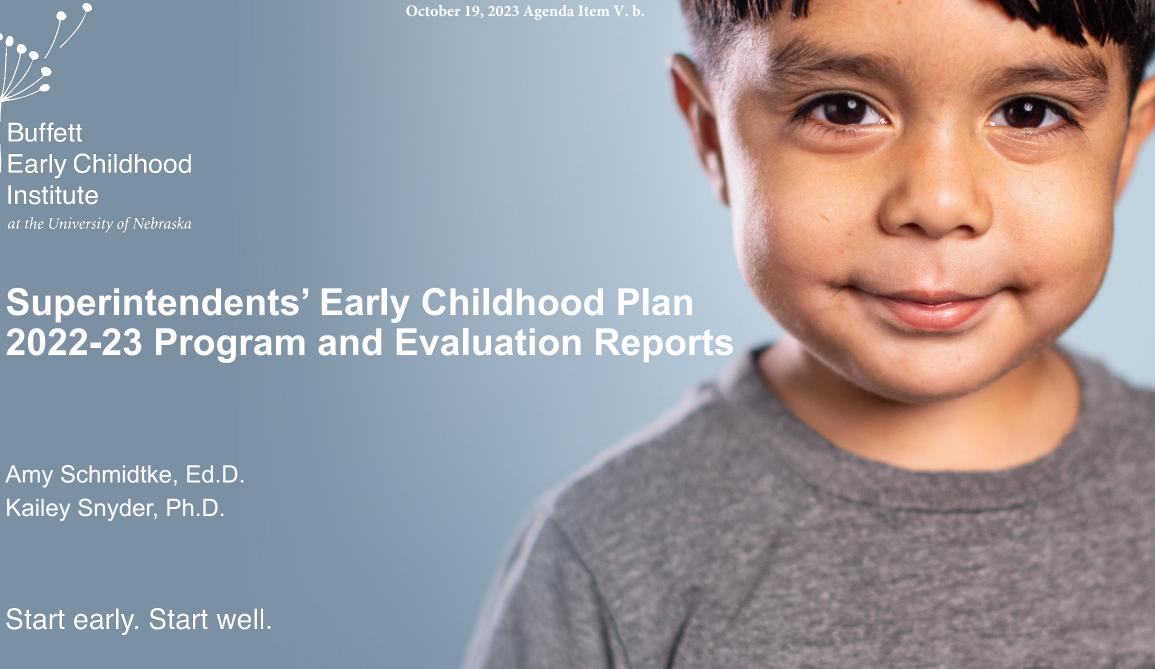
"Nghia and his team have been very responsive and communicative when we have been referring clients to Parent University. We're excited about the opportunities Parent University provides to families, and we look forward to more continued collaboration to support the refugee settling in North Omaha." – Tim Walker, Education Program Manager, Refugee Empowerment (10/11/2023)

"LCCN's Parent University and MCC Family Literacy partnership addresses a critical need in the landscape of adult education in Omaha by providing childcare and parental skills courses for the students that compliment their regular English or GED study. Having an accessible option for students that meets their needs and those of their families is invaluable." – Liam Al-Hindi, MCC Instructor (10/12/2023)

Parent University Future

- 1. Enhance Partnerships with Schools in District 2
- 2. Provide Comprehensive Family Support Service for all members
- 3. Expand the Array of Classes Offered at the Center
- 4. Establish a Robust and Inclusive Literacy Support Program
- 5. Strengthen Collaborations with Community Organizations to Foster a Synergistic Network (Preventing Service Duplication)
- 6. Enhance Organizational Capacity to Serve More Families with Exceptional Engagement and Services
- 7. Amplify Parental Involvement and Empowerment within the Program
- 8. Cultivate a Robust Volunteer Program

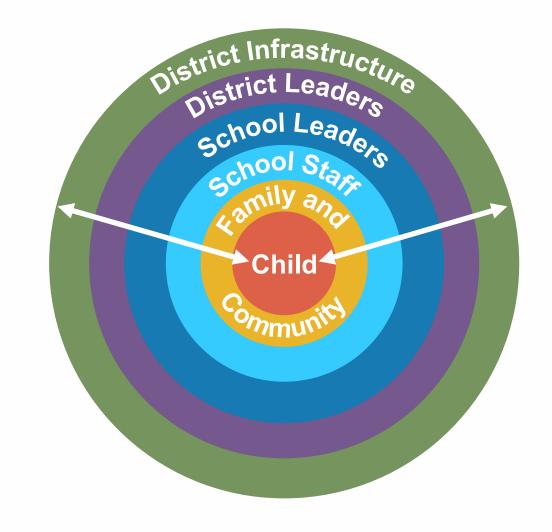




Levels of Support

- 1. Customized Assistance to Districts
- 2. School as Hub Programming for Birth through Grade 3
- 3. Professional Development for All

Superintendents' Early Childhood Plan 2022-23 School Year



2022-23 Annual Program Report

Superintendents' Early Childhood Plan Annual Report: 2022-23

EIGHTH YEAR REPORT





Key Programmatic Accomplishments

Leadership Effectiveness

Instructional Excellence

Family and Community Partnership Engagement

- Action plans guide establishment of responsive early learning priorities
- Collaboration among district leaders, school staff, and Institute staff is valued
- Increased family engagement competency for school leaders

- Increased social and emotional skill development competency for educators
- Instructional coaching viewed as supportive

- Trusting family-school relationships
- Increased engagement opportunities and attendance
- Increased partnerships with community resources and child care centers

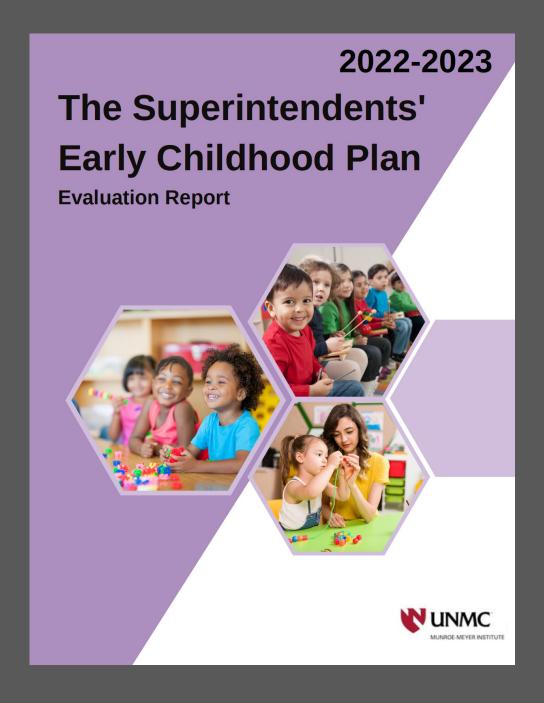
2022-23 Enhanced Consultation and Support Services

APPENDIX A. SUMMARY OF SERVICES AVAILABLE THROUGH THE PLAN

Consultation And Support Services By Level Of Support	No. Of Districts Participating in 2022-23	New Or Enhanced Service in 2022-23
Customized Assistance—Services available to all 11 districts in the Learning Community		
District-Level Action Planning		
Annual action plan facilitation	9*	✓
Action plan review and discussion	9*	✓
Recommended activities to reach action plan goals	6	✓
District-Level Project Management		
Co-creation of long-range plans: activities, milestones, timelines, responsibilities	6	✓
Quarterly progress checks	6	✓
Summative progress reflection and report	6	✓
Using Data for Continuous Improvement in District Early Childhood Efforts		
Data collection system design and support for district early childhood programs	2	✓
Data collection and analysis connected to action plan goals	1	✓
Professional Development, Including Consultation and Coaching		
Facilitated presentations and workshops for leaders, teachers, and staff	9*	
Ongoing consultation for district leaders	9*	
School as Hub - Additional services available to the six districts with School as Hub schools		
School-Level Project Management Tied to District-Level Plans		
Monthly district planning meetings	6	
Monthly school-based team meetings in School as Hub schools, expanded in 2022–23 to include district leaders	6	V
Using Data for Continuous Improvement in Family Engagement Efforts		
Data collection system facilitation for family engagement staff	6	
Professional Development, including Consultation and Coaching, in School as Hub Schools		
Monthly Community of Practice meetings for principals	6	
Monthly Community of Practice meetings and quarterly planning meetings for family engagement staff	6	
Ongoing consultation for principals and other school leaders	6	
Coaching cycles for PreK-Grade 3 teachers, paraprofessionals, and family and community engagement staff	6	
Family and Community Engagement Staffing and Services		
Family and community engagement staffing (home visitors, family facilitators, and/or community partner facilitators) adapted to district and school needs	6	✓
Family engagement events ("two generation" events for children and families)	6	
PD for All – PD services available to early educators and instructional leaders in the Omaha area		
PD for All "Bite-Sized" Digital Learning Sessions		
Three 10-minute videos	_**	✓
Six hour-long Twitter chats	_**	✓
Infographics and emails with links to additional resources	_**	✓
Essential Child Experiences Instructional Toolkit Workgroup		
Monthly workgroup meetings	_**	

are available to birth-Grade 3 educators in all settings, including home-, community-, and school-based settings.

2022-23
Evaluation
Report



Evaluation Findings

Superintendents' Early Childhood Plan 2022-2023



Agenda

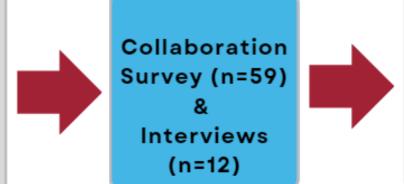
- Collaboration evaluation findings
- Domain specific findings
 - Leadership Effectiveness
 - Instructional Excellence
 - Family and Community Partnership Engagement
- Generalized conclusions
- Questions



Collaboration Findings

What is the level of collaboration between the Institute and program stakeholders?

What are the barriers and facilitators for collaboration between the Institute and program stakeholders?



Adapted Version of Collaboration Scale*

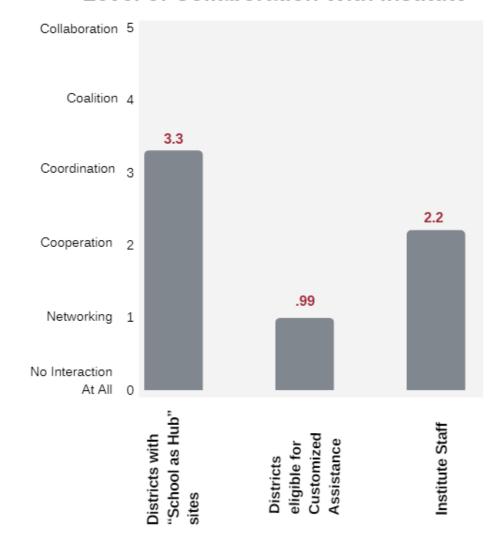
Interview Guide developed around action planning guide



^{*}Survey adapted from: Frey, B. B., Lohmeier, J. H., Lee, S. W., & Tollefson, N. (2006). Measuring collaboration among grant partners. American journal of evaluation, 27(3), 383-392.

High-Level Findings from Collaboration Scale

Level of Collaboration With Institute

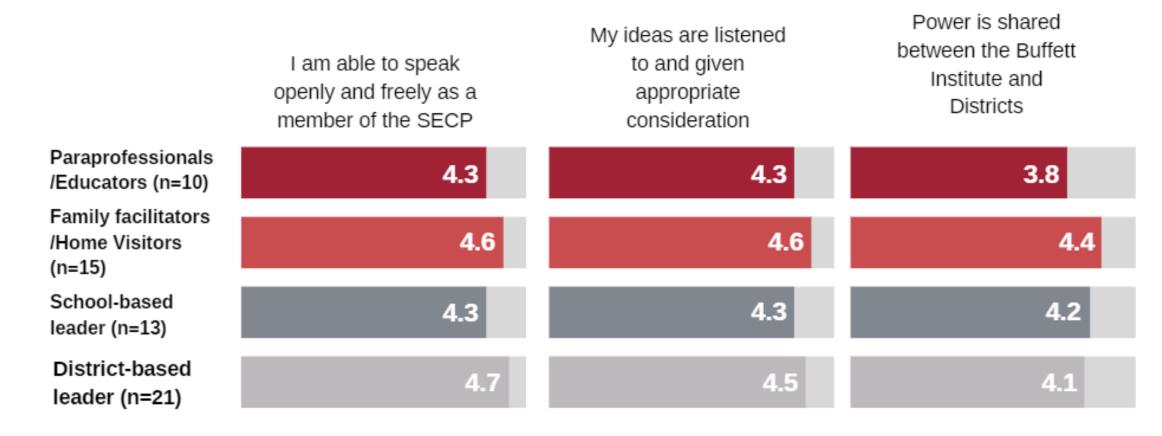


LEVEL OF COLLABORATION

Networking 1	Cooperation 2	Coordination 3	Coalition 4	Collaboration 5
-Loosely defined roles -Little communication -All decisions are made independently	-Provide information to each other -Somewhat defined roles -Formal communication -All decisions are made independently	-Share information and resources -Defined roles -Regular communication -Some shared decision making	-Share ideas, information, and resources -Regular and focused communication -Frequent shared decision making	-Frequent and strategic communication-Mutual trust -Shared decision making in all decisions -Consensus reached in all decisions



High-Level Findings from Collaboration Scale





High-Level Findings from Collaboration Interviews

- The Institute is seen as effective source for information dissemination and expertise
- The Birth through 3rd grade approach is valued by districts
- Districts believe they have been better able to reach families since the onset of the SECP
- Translation of new knowledge into practice is a primary barrier across action plan domains
- There is a desire to continue to identify ways to align school/district-level priorities with SECP programmatic strategies

"One of the biggest things is really reaching the families prior to them coming into school, when they are...under five, having them feel they are welcome at school and part of the [school name] family" -School Administrator
-District Administrator

"We have the training, we just don't know how to connect it" -School Staff Member

Domain Specific Evaluation Findings

PROGRAM DOMAINS OF FOCUS

Leadership Effectiveness

District Organization and Capacity

School Leadership Instructional Excellence

Foundations for Early Learning

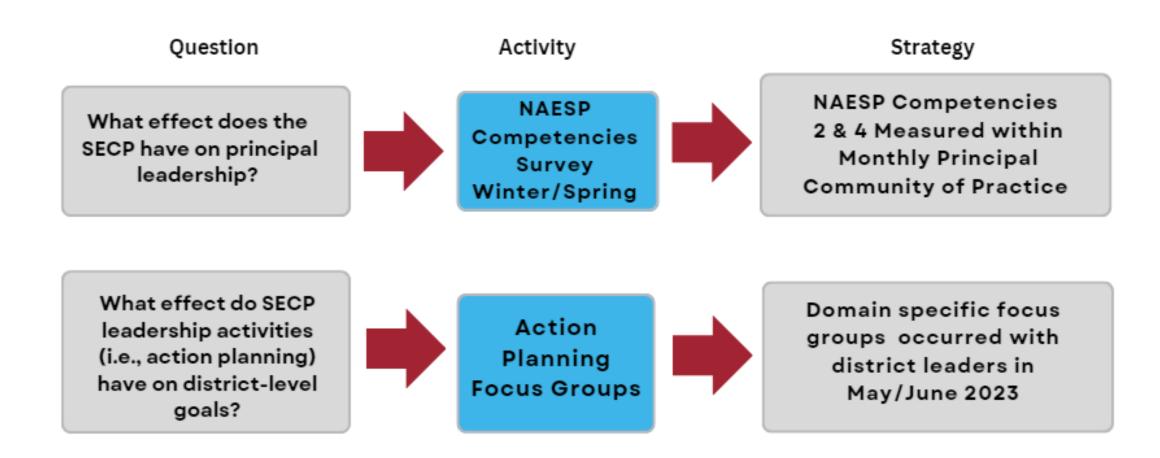
Essential Child Experiences Family and Community Partnership Engagement

Family Focus

Community-School Connections

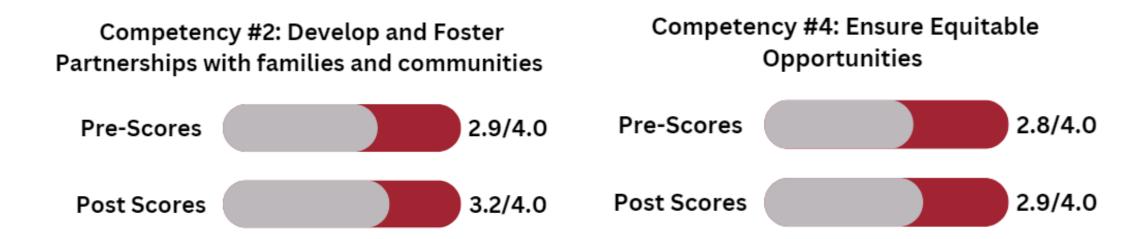


Leadership Effectiveness





National Association of Early Childhood Principals (NAECP) Survey Findings-Community of Practice



Scores were on a 1-4 scale (1, highly inaccurate; 4, highly accurate).



Self-Reported Progress Across Action Plan Domains

LEADERSHIP EFFECTIVENESS (70.8)



INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE (79.6)



FAMILY & COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS ENGAGEMENT (83.8)





Leadership Effectiveness: A solid foundation has been laid

"I like that we had a system in place... We're having the ability to have those conversations [about early childhood] and really set aside some time to — in a busy year — to have some really specific focus."

Instructional Excellence: Improved Early Childhood Knowledge Base

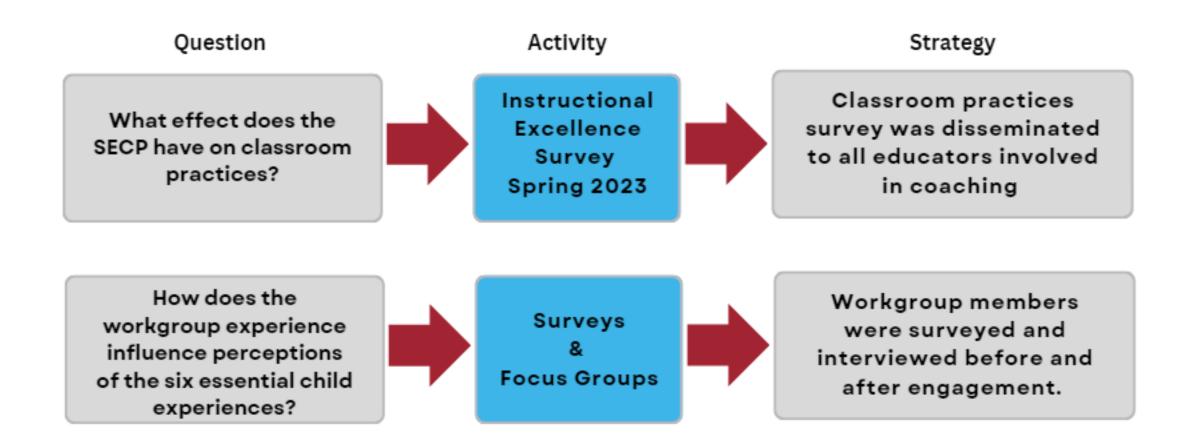
"That's really helpful to have Buffett come in and help with the Second Step...That was incredible to have the consistency of that."

Family & Community Partnerships Engagement: Community and family partnerships have improved

"I think based on our measure [family engagement survey], we had great success for this. In terms of engagement...tons of things to celebrate."



Instructional Excellence

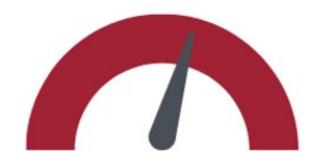




Instructional Excellence

57.8% of respondents somewhat agreed (15.7%) or strongly agreed (42.1%) the Institute changed the way they approach their instructional practice. 77.7% of respondents somewhat agreed (33.3%) or strongly agreed (44.4%) the Institute had given them new ideas for how to approach their instructional practice.

72.1% of respondents somewhat agreed (33.3%) or strongly agreed (38.8%) the Institute had given them new resources to use in their instructional practice.





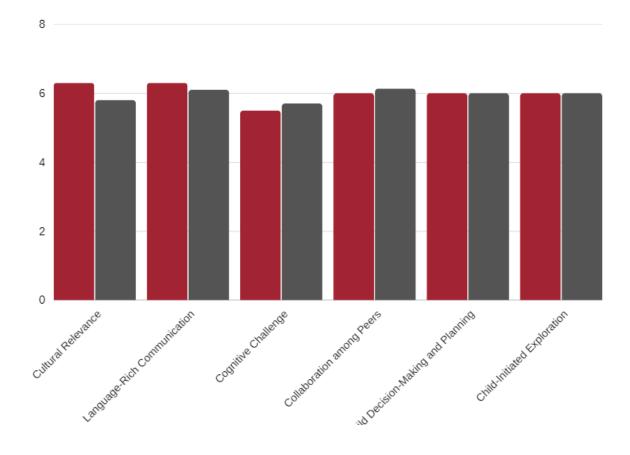




Instructional Toolkit Workgroups

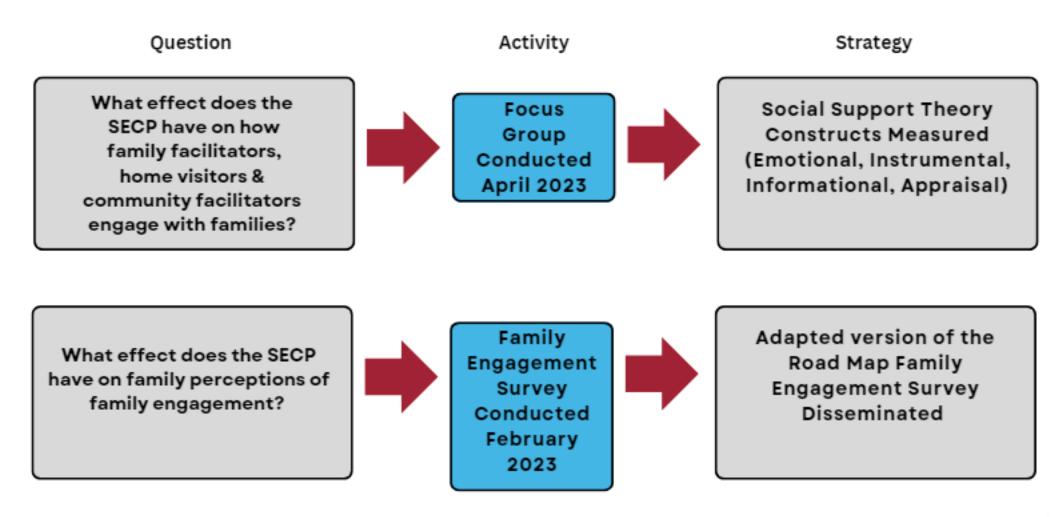
- Workgroup members report increasing their awareness, intentionality, comfort and empathy within their instructional practice
- Cohort member confidence to integrate the six essential experiences was high at program onset and remained high after the workgroup experience
- Workgroup members desired additional in-person peer to peer engagement and increased clarity for program expectations and outcomes

Confidence Levels

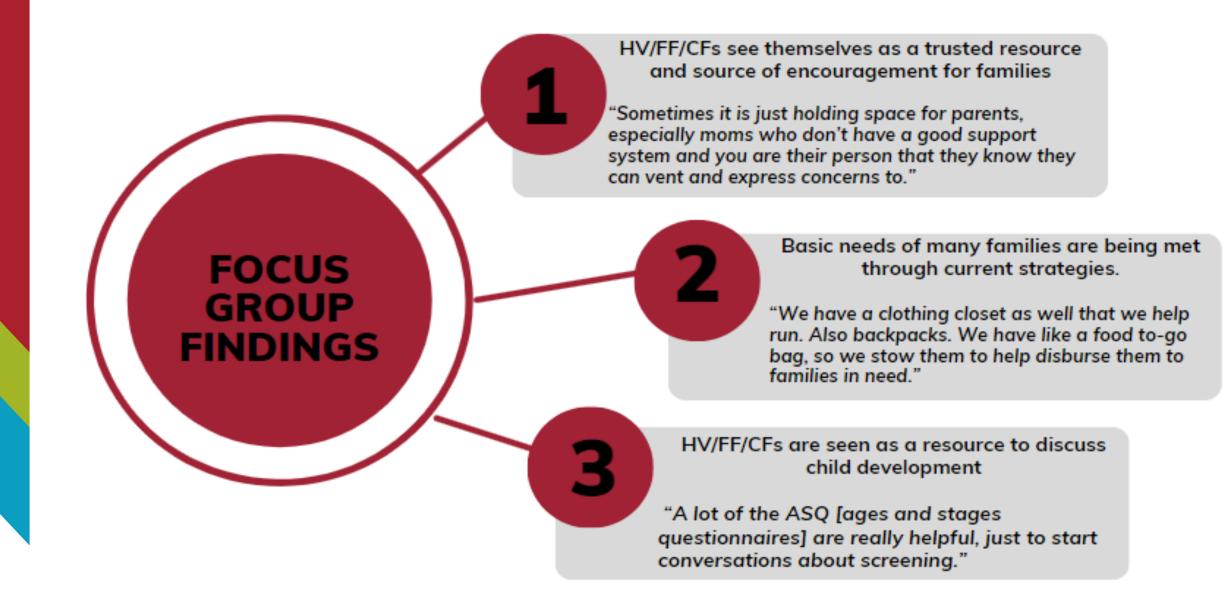




Family and Community Partnerships Engagement







6 Domains

Parent/Family Knowledge and Confidence

Welcoming and Culturally
Responsive School
Climate

Parent/Family Influence and Decision Making

Family-Educator Trust

Family-Educator Communication

Principal Leadership for Engagement

- Perceptions of SECP schools indicate families (n=499)
 view schools positively across domains (1-7 scale)
- The highest rated item was: "if your home language is not English: I know someone at (school) who will assist me and my family in our home language" (mean: 6.42)
- The lowest rated item was: "I have opportunities to influence what happens at (school) (mean: 5.85)





PD for All

Question

What is the reach of the "bitesize" PD for All approach?

If and how are early childhood educators implementing knowledge learned?

What are the best practices and barriers to new knowledge implementation within instructional settings?

Activity

Longitudinal
Cohort (n=13)
Surveys,
Interviews,
Social Media
Analytics



Strategy

Cohort was followed for 6
months. Evaluation was
guided by Selfdetermination theory to
identify how PD for All
influences educators
autonomy, competence
and relatedness for
building and sustaining
powerful family
partnerships



PD for All

- Engaged participants identify PD for All materials as an effective way to receive helpful information
- There was an appreciation from educators for the bite-sized learning model:

"I think it [bite-sized learning approach] is very informative, I don't think there is any wasted time. Like this is your 8 minutes, this is all of the information you need. There's no fluff to it, no beating around the bush, even with the questions on Twitter-it's very direct, to the point questions."

- There was a desire for greater depth of information shared and more opportunities for peer to peer engagement
- Reach of Twitter chats and videos was limited and declined over the 6month time period



Generalized Findings Across Domains

- 1. The Institute is seen as an expert resource for knowledge dissemination and curriculum development
- School and District-level staff experience barriers translating new knowledge into changes in practice
- School and District-level staff have high levels of confidence related to current practices
- Families within School as Hub sites perceive high levels of engagement from school staff
- 5. Family Facilitators/Home Visitors/Community Facilitators are trusted resources with diverse roles across Districts



Questions?





Looking Ahead to 2023-24

- 1. Continue to develop pathways to share **Institute expertise**
- 2. Focus on providing supports that help leaders and staff translate knowledge to practice
- 3. Build on **high levels of confidence in current practice** as a foundation to continuous growth toward excellence
- 4. Build on **high levels of family engagement** to advance active family-school partnerships for children's learning
- 5. Expand School as Hub efforts made by **family facilitators/home visitors/community facilitators** and leaders to include more educators and paraprofessionals



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BUFFETT EARLY CHILDHOOD INSTITUTE

Superintendents' Early Childhood Plan Annual Report: 2022-23

EIGHTH YEAR REPORT





ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Superintendents' Early Childhood Plan Annual Report is a collaborative effort among Buffett Early Childhood Institute staff, including Venessa Bryant, Cama Charlet, Kristen Cunningham, Erin Duffy, Rebecca Elder, Allyson Freeman, Tonya Jolley, Cris López Anderson, Sarah Moulton, Duane Retzlaff, Amy Schmidtke, Erica Sesay, Greg Welch, and Monica Wells.

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Learning Community of Douglas and Sarpy Counties Coordinating Council and the 11 school district superintendents

Evaluation team at the Munroe-Meyer Institute at the University of Nebraska Medical Center

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Superintendents' Early Childhood Plan Annual Report: 2022-23

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Superintendents' Early Childhood Plan Overview

We know from more than 60 years of early childhood research what quality early care and education looks like and how it benefits children throughout their lifetime. The Superintendents' Early Childhood Plan is designed to translate this knowledge into practice to close opportunity gaps for young children facing persistent economic and social disparities across the Omaha metro area—because all children deserve the opportunity to succeed.

WHY THE PLAN WAS CREATED

The Superintendents' Plan was launched in Omaha and surrounding communities in fall 2015. It was created in response to state legislation directing metro Omaha area superintendents to develop and enact a plan to ensure young children living in neighborhoods impacted by high concentrations of poverty have equitable access to the quality early care and education opportunities they need to succeed in life. The plan was developed by the Buffett Early Childhood Institute at the University of Nebraska in partnership with the 11 school districts of the Learning Community of Douglas and Sarpy Counties. School district and Institute partners work together to implement the plan.

The plan is grounded in the understanding that local elementary schools can serve as community hubs that connect young children, birth–Grade 3, and their families to quality early learning experiences. It draws from decades of research showing that quality early childhood programming—that is, programming that incorporates home visiting, builds connections between families and schools, and facilitates children's transitions from early childhood programs into the primary grades—provides significant benefits to children. For example, children who experience quality in their early care and education are more likely to:

- Develop the cognitive skills they need to succeed
- Obtain a college degree and have full-time employment in adulthood
- Experience positive lifetime health outcomes

The Superintendents' Plan is designed to translate this knowledge into practice by engaging people across all levels of a school district community in collaborative efforts to improve birth–Grade 3 policies and practices. Research shows that this type of collaborative, behind-the-scenes work—involving district and school leaders, early childhood educators, community partners, and families—is necessary to ensure that every adult who works with young children can access the professional resources and

support they need to provide quality early learning opportunities to each child who walks through their door.^{ii,iii}

This systemic, community-based, and evidence-based framework—known as the "School as Hub Birth–Grade 3 Approach"—guides everything that school district and Institute partners do as we work together to help Omaha metro school districts build their capacity to provide quality early learning opportunities to all children, from birth through Grade 3.^{iv}

WHAT THE PLAN PROVIDES

The plan provides three levels of support—to school districts, elementary schools, and early childhood professionals in the Omaha metro—as follows:

Customized Assistance to School Districts. All 11 school districts in the Learning
Community have access to consultation services through the Superintendents' Plan.
These services are tailored to the unique strengths and needs of each district and
are designed to help them build their organizational infrastructure and capacity for
providing quality early childhood programming to all young children in their district.
Consultation services are provided by Institute staff in collaboration with other state
and national consultants.

In 2022–23, leaders in nine of the 11 Learning Community districts participated in Customized Assistance consultation services to develop and implement district action plans that specify what they are doing to close opportunity gaps for young children.

• School as Hub Programming in Selected Elementary Schools. The plan provides more intensive support to selected elementary schools in neighborhoods impacted by high concentrations of poverty to promote equitable early learning opportunities for young children living in those neighborhoods. These schools implement programming designed to establish the school as a "hub" that connects young children and their families with quality early childhood services and resources. Each of these "School as Hub" schools employs family and community engagement staff (a home visitor, family facilitator, and/or a community facilitator), funded by the plan and supported by the Institute, to provide early parenting supports, connect schools to community child care centers, and promote family-school-community partnerships.

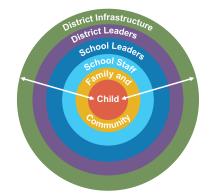
In the 2022–23 academic year, eight schools across six districts received support to implement School as Hub programming.

• Professional Development for All. Professional Development for All, or "PD for All," is an annual series of free learning opportunities available to early childhood professionals who work with children from birth through Grade 3 in Douglas and Sarpy Counties. These opportunities introduce evidence-based instructional practices while creating a space for early childhood professionals to gather and learn from one another. Each series is designed in response to the emerging needs of metro-area early childhood educators, who help shape both the content and format of PD for All.

In 2022–23, PD for All was provided in three "bite-sized" learning sessions—a type of digital learning that is delivered in small pieces to meet the needs of 21st-century professionals who are seeking quality instruction in easily accessible formats.

A summary of the consultation and support services available at each level of support is provided in Appendix A, and Figure 1 summarizes participation numbers for 2022–23.

FIGURE 1. | SUPERINTENDENTS' EARLY CHILDHOOD PLAN 2022-2023 SCHOOL YEAR PARTICIPATION NUMBERS



DISTRICT INFRASTRUCTURE

School districts within Douglas and Sarpy Counties

11

DISTRICT LEADERS

Additional district leaders actively involved in Superintendents' Plan action plans

8

District leaders involved in customized assistance leadership workshops

11

Superintendents

11

Superintendents' Plan workgroup members

11

District leaders participating in professional development with data specialist

100

principals/school leaders engaging

School as Hub full district

in professional development

SCHOOL LEADERS

Additional School as Hub principals, assistant principals, coaches, instructional facilitators, etc., actively involved in the Superintendents' Plan

7

School as Hub principals participating in Community of Practice

8

38

SCHOOL STAFF

Home visitors. family facilitators, community facilitators

15

Educators engaging in 1:1 coaching

31

Essential Child **Experiences Toolkit** Workgroup members

41

School as Hub PreK-Grade 3 classroom teachers

107

Educators engaging in district or school professional development

624

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY

Community partners connecting families with resources or services

15

Home visitor and family facilitator family enrollment

116

Superintendents' Plan family engagement and support opportunities

4,080

CHILD

School as Hub home visitation and family facilitation child enrollment

166

School as Hub Drop in and Play participants

282

Children in the classrooms of educators participating in coaching

258

School as Hub Socialization participants

612

School as Hub PreK-Grade 3 enrollment 2022-2023

2,196

Superintendents' Plan family engagement and support opportunities

7,253

Evaluation of the Plan

The Superintendents' Early Childhood Plan is evaluated annually, with a focus on identifying the extent to which the plan is advancing birth–Grade 3 practices and programming in participating districts and schools. The third-party evaluation is conducted by the Munroe-Meyer Institute at the University of Nebraska Medical Center, and Institute and school district partners use evaluation findings to refine and improve their collaborative efforts.

Since the plan was initiated in 2015, annual evaluation findings have shown increasing awareness, understanding, and commitment to implementing birth–Grade 3 programming among educators and staff in participating districts and schools. School as Hub schools report a growing commitment and capacity to engage families of young children in new and more inclusive ways. These schools also report improvements in teacher-child interactions and instruction in PreK–Grade 3 classrooms. Families that participate in home visiting, family facilitation, and parent-child socialization opportunities report many positive experiences, including increased connection with school leaders and teachers and reduced familial stress.

When the COVID-19 pandemic closed schools across the Omaha metro area in the spring of 2020, school district and Institute partners worked quickly to adapt the plan's programming and services to meet the immediate needs of children and families in School as Hub schools. In 2021–22, as schools returned to in-person learning full time, Institute staff took an "all hands on deck" approach to support the day-to-day needs of schools experiencing staffing shortages. At the same time, Institute staff facilitated district-level efforts to develop birth–Grade 3 action plans tailored to each district.

In 2022–23, Institute partners supported districts and schools as they began implementing district-level action plans. The evaluation was designed to assess the level of collaboration between the Institute and district partners, and the effect of the Superintendents' Plan on school districts' practices in three high-impact areas—leadership effectiveness, instructional excellence, and family and community partnership engagement. In addition, the evaluation assessed the impact of the plan's professional development opportunities, including PD for All and the Essential Child Experiences Instructional Toolkit workgroup, on participating early childhood educators.

Key takeaways from the 2022–23 evaluation report include:

 District leaders value consulting with local and national experts to establish early learning priorities that are responsive to the strengths and needs of children and families in their district.

Evaluation of the Plan

- School districts with School as Hub sites see collaboration with the Institute team and their colleagues as a key support for reaching action plan goals, including gaining knowledge and resolving challenges.
- School as Hub leaders and staff appreciated having district leaders actively involved in school-based team meetings because it helped them connect their work to district goals—and vice versa.
- For district leaders, understanding the perspectives of those directly engaged in School as Hub work has informed their decision-making at the district level, generating new intentionality and momentum in advancing birth–Grade 3 priorities.

The following section summarizes key accomplishments and additional insights gleaned from implementing and evaluating the Superintendents' Plan in 2022–23. Detailed evaluation findings are available in the 2022–23 Superintendents' Early Childhood Plan Evaluation Report.



Key Accomplishments in 2022–23

LEADERSHIP EFFECTIVENESS

In 2022–23, the Superintendents' Plan partners provided more explicit support to district and school leaders—and asked more of them.

District Leaders

Members of the Superintendents' Early Childhood Plan workgroup, which includes representatives from the 11 school districts in Douglas and Sarpy Counties, expanded their leadership roles in 2022–23. Workgroup members collaborated with others in their district—including fellow district leaders, school leaders, teachers, and family engagement staff—to develop action plans based on the unique interests and needs of their districts in early learning. Highlights from these efforts include the following:

- Across all districts, more district leaders engaged in the plan than ever before.
- Consultation opportunities were expanded for the five districts in the Learning Community that have access to Customized Assistance resources but do not have School as Hub schools.
- Eleven leaders from two districts engaged in a workshop series with a national expert in early learning leadership focused on how to enhance district-level infrastructure and capacity to effectively support quality, continuity, and equity in early childhood programming.
- Leaders from two districts with School as Hub sites worked with Institute staff to
 expand and enhance their data systems to facilitate the collection and use of data
 from all early childhood programs across their districts; these districts can now use
 the data to guide programmatic improvements districtwide.
- Asking more from district leaders was first met with reservations—but as progress became evident, momentum and commitment grew and continues to build.

"District leaders such as myself have benefited from our collaboration with local and national experts. We are provided the time we need to vision, create, and enact action plans to help us develop our school leaders, focus on high-leverage instructional practices, and engage our families. Our expertise and systems thinking have been greatly influenced, which has led to better alignment in our birth through Grade 3 curriculum and early childhood programming."

- District administrator

"I appreciate what you guys are doing. Early on in the process it was like 'oh, here's another thing.' But as you start seeing that momentum and start to see the change made, all of a sudden that thing that you thought you had to do, you kind of want to do. You appreciate that it's occurring because you start to see that change. Having that plan and the consistency—you're starting to see the benefits."

- District administrator

School Leaders

The eight School as Hub principals participated in individualized coaching or consultation meetings with Institute staff and monthly community of practice meetings focused on developing capacity as leaders of early learning in their buildings. They also worked with Institute staff to provide leadership at monthly School as Hub team meetings, including district leaders, family facilitators, home visitors, and community facilitators. Highlights from the year include the following:

- School as Hub principals valued learning from each other during their monthly community of practice meetings about how to improve family engagement practices.
- Survey results show that principals increased their competency to engage intentionally with families, especially those who have been historically marginalized.
- Principals also showed growth in ensuring smooth transitions for students and families as they enter Kindergarten and change grade levels through Grade 3.

"It was great to connect with other principals on topics that are relevant to my daily work. I was able to connect with another principal regarding some strategies they have implemented at their building, and we have interest in exploring these strategies in our own building. We are working through our site planning process. I am going to ensure family engagement is represented within our plan and my hope is that our parent/staff Belonging Team plays a major role in development and implementation of the plan."

- School as Hub principal

INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE

Following more than two years of pandemic-related disruptions, the 2022–23 school year began with a palpable sense of renewed energy among school district and Institute partners to rebuild connections and promote learning success for children across the birth–Grade 3 continuum and beyond. District action plans called for increased instructional support focused on foundations of early learning. Institute staff partnered with district staff to support their instructional goals by providing on-site professional development opportunities. In School as Hub schools, instructional coaching and facilitated workshops were provided to PreK–Grade 3 teachers, paraprofessionals, and school staff. Highlights include the following:

- In collaboration with district partners, Institute staff provided 46 professional development sessions across eight school districts.
- Across districts and schools, leaders and teachers valued the professional learning focused on helping children develop the social and emotional skills they need to succeed—including skills such as self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making.
- Institute staff worked closely with staff in School as Hub schools to coordinate coaching schedules to help address persistent, post-pandemic staffing challenges.
- When surveyed, educators who received coaching indicated that they viewed the Institute as a supportive partner for resource dissemination and as a supportive network.

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS ENGAGEMENT

Building authentic relationships and connections among schools, families, early care providers, and community leaders ensures that students have access to what they need from birth through Grade 3. In 2022–23, Institute staff partnered with School as Hub schools and districts to strengthen and expand partnerships with families and communities. The commitment to families in School as Hub schools was evident in several activities and developments across districts, including the following:

- Family and community partnership engagement staff indicated that their greatest
 accomplishments were associated with developing trusting relationships with
 parents and families as well as being seen as a source of support within schools and
 communities where they work.
- Districts updated family engagement staffing to address staffing shortages and increase family and community involvement. When staffing shortages forced some

- schools to close preschool classrooms, one district created a community facilitator position to help bridge the gap by building capacity among local child care providers.
- School as Hub family engagement staff expanded recruitment efforts beyond the school walls and increased the number of "two generation" socialization opportunities for children and their families—engaging more families than ever before.
- Family engagement quarterly meetings provided a new opportunity for School as Hub
 family engagement teams to come together to train on data collection procedures,
 review their individual school data, and to collaborate on new initiatives.
- New data-collection efforts highlighted the importance of community partnerships, strengthening the awareness of community relationships that were already established and reflecting schools' commitment to supporting children and families by embracing the communities they live in.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR EARLY EDUCATORS ACROSS THE OMAHA METRO AREA

In addition to offering instructional support to educators working in schools, the Superintendents' Plan offers professional learning to early care and education professionals from all settings through PD for All and other opportunities, such as the Essential Child Experiences Instructional Toolkit workgroup. Highlights include the following:

In response to educators' requests, the Institute delivered three "bite-sized" PD for All sessions in 2022–23 on the theme of "Building and Sustaining Powerful Partnerships With Families."



- The PD for All sessions included 10-minute videos featuring local educators and community members as content experts, talking about strategies that work for them in the communities they serve.
- Participants valued the diversity of perspectives, bite-sized approach, and the video delivery.
- Participants in the Essential Child Experiences Toolkit workgroup valued connecting
 with and learning from colleagues across the birth–Grade 3 continuum and from
 different care settings, including home-, community-, and school-based settings.

Looking Ahead to 2023–24

The school districts of Douglas and Sarpy Counties and the Buffett Early Childhood Institute are expanding the reach of the Superintendents' Plan through new approaches to collaboration. In 2022–23, the plan engaged more leaders, more educators, more community partners, more families, and more children than ever before. In 2023–24, plan partners seek to build on this momentum. Together, they will:

- Continue developing clear pathways for all 11 districts in the Learning Community to access consultation services and other resources available through the Superintendents' Early Childhood Plan. The clarity provided by the new action planning tools and resources introduced in 2022–23 allowed more districts to tap into the plan's Customized Assistance services and resources. Through conversations and collaboration survey results, we know that districts appreciate this clarity and value the Institute's support. Collaboration interview results indicated a desire for more concrete support translating the birth–Grade 3 approach into practical strategies. In 2023–24, the Institute will continue to develop partnerships and learn more about the needs of each district so we can provide customized assistance efforts that support the unique early childhood programming goals and community needs in each district.
- Use data to identify specific, concrete ways for leaders and staff to apply their knowledge about quality early childhood instructional and family practices to close opportunity gaps for children and families. District and school leaders have asked for support in identifying concrete examples and action steps to accomplish their goals and create more equitable early learning opportunities for children and families living in poverty and other conditions of familial stress. In the coming year, the Institute team will expand its focus on data during district and school-based team meetings to drive targeted action plan progress and data-driven decision-making. This will involve disaggregating data with school leaders and staff to study which children are achieving positive outcomes and accessing essential support and which children are not. This approach will help leaders better understand where to focus efforts and resources to close gaps in opportunities and achievement.
- Provide more opportunities to facilitate learning at the school level, increasing the number of teachers and staff who understand and intentionally implement birth–Grade 3 instructional practices and family engagement strategies. Districts and schools are promoting children's early learning and development by providing professional development and curriculum resources designed to help children learn social and emotional skills, such as self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. Going forward, district, school, and Institute partners will identify and facilitate new opportunities for more teachers and staff to learn, apply, and lead the birth–Grade 3 approach in their school settings.

- Continue expanding family engagement and community partnership efforts,
 with a focus on engaging more educators. In 2022–23, leaders and staff in districts
 with School as Hub sites reported increased engagement with families and/or
 community partners. Next steps will involve expanded connections with community
 child care centers, increased connections to community partners as resources, and
 more professional learning offerings for educators focused on family and community
 partnership concepts.
- Continue providing opportunities for professionals across the Omaha area to access bite-sized learning that is responsive to their needs. Staffing challenges and lack of substitute teachers make it difficult for early childhood professionals to leave work for a day to participate in professional development opportunities. Bite-sized learning makes it possible for educators to consume learning when it is convenient for them, and in 2022–23, educators appreciated being able to learn in their own time and in small bites. Looking ahead, Institute staff will offer expanded opportunities for PD for All participants to access peer-to-peer learning, using Zoombased webinars and video facilitator guides to deepen understanding, localize content for specific settings and communities, and translate new learning into practice.

Together, these initiatives are designed to build the capacity of everyone in the Learning Community of Douglas and Sarpy Counties—including district and school leaders, early childhood educators, community partners, and families—to work together to ensure every child has access to the quality early learning experiences they need to succeed.

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- **Sebring, P., Allensworth, E., Bryk, A., Easton, J., & Luppescu, S. (2006). The essential supports for school improvement (September issue). Consortium on School Research at the University of Chicago.
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APPENDIX A. SUMMARY OF SERVICES AVAILABLE THROUGH THE PLAN

TABLE 1. | CONSULTATION AND SUPPORT SERVICES AVAILABLE IN THE SUPERINTENDENTS' EARLY CHILDHOOD PLAN, INCLUDING NEW AND ENHANCED SERVICES IN 2022-23

Consultation and Support Services by Level of Support	No. of Districts Participating in 2022-23	New or Enhanced Service in 2022-23
Customized Assistance—Services available to all 11 districts in the Learning Community		
District-Level Action Planning		
Annual action plan facilitation	9*	✓
Action plan review and discussion	9*	✓
Recommended activities to reach action plan goals	6	✓
District-Level Project Management		
Co-creation of long-range plans: activities, milestones, timelines, responsibilities	6	✓
Quarterly progress checks	6	✓
Summative progress reflection and report	6	✓
Using Data for Continuous Improvement in District Early Childhood Efforts		
Data collection system design and support for district early childhood programs	2	✓
Data collection and analysis connected to action plan goals	1	✓
Professional Development, Including Consultation and Coaching		
Facilitated presentations and workshops for leaders, teachers, and staff	9*	
Ongoing consultation for district leaders	9*	
School as Hub – Additional services available to the six districts with School as Hub schools		
School-Level Project Management Tied to District-Level Plans		
Monthly district planning meetings	6	
Monthly school-based team meetings in School as Hub schools, expanded in 2022–23 to include district leaders	6	✓
Using Data for Continuous Improvement in Family Engagement Efforts		
Data collection system facilitation for family engagement staff	6	
Professional Development, including Consultation and Coaching, in School as Hub Schools		
Monthly Community of Practice meetings for principals	6	
Monthly Community of Practice meetings and quarterly planning meetings for family engagement staff	6	
Ongoing consultation for principals and other school leaders	6	
Coaching cycles for PreK-Grade 3 teachers, paraprofessionals, and family and community engagement staff	6	
Family and Community Engagement Staffing and Services		
Family and community engagement staffing (home visitors, family facilitators, and/or community facilitators) adapted to district and school needs	6	√
Family engagement events ("two generation" events for children and families)	6	
PD for All —PD services available to early educators and instructional leaders in the Omaha area		
PD for All "Bite-Sized" Digital Learning Sessions		
Three 10-minute videos	-**	✓
Six hour-long Twitter chats	_**	✓
Infographics and emails with links to additional resources	_**	✓
Essential Child Experiences Instructional Toolkit Workgroup		
Monthly workgroup meetings	_**	

^{*}This number includes all six districts with School as Hub schools.

**Participation in PD for All and the Essential Child Experiences Instructional Toolkit workgroup are not tracked by school district; these opportunities are available to birth–Grade 3 educators in all settings, including home-, community-, and school-based settings.



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2022-2023

The Superintendents' Early Childhood Plan

Evaluation Report









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Executive Summary

The Superintendents' Early Childhood Plan (SECP) was introduced in the Learning Community of Douglas and Sarpy Counties in the fall of 2015. It offers an innovative, comprehensive approach to reducing achievement gaps for young children from birth through Grade 3 in the Omaha metro area. The 2022-2023 school year marks the 8th program year of the Superintendent's Early Childhood Plan. The full implementation of School as Hub takes place in eight elementary schools across six school districts in the Learning Community of Douglas and Sarpy Counties. This year's evaluation is employing a new strategy based on the findings of a landscape assessment completed in 2021-22. The evaluation is grounded in a value engaged evaluation approach with primary outcomes of focus of program improvement and program quality assessment. A combination of assessments and methodologies will be used to evaluate the collaborative relationship between BECI and school districts as well as district-level and school-level changes. Specific focus will include components of School as Hub, home visiting, school supports for PreK to Grade 3 families, educator professional development and change in educator practice.

Birth through Grade 3 Approach



Evaluation Questions

The goals for the 2022-2023 evaluation are split across the three domains of focus (Leadership Effectiveness, Instructional Excellence and Family and Community Partnership and Engagement). In addition, a collaboration evaluation is being conducted to understand the relationship between the Institute and district partners. Finally, additional efforts supported within the Superintendents' Early Childhood Plan include the Instructional Toolkit Workgroup and PD for All opportunities. Evaluation questions for each of these programs are cited below.

Action Planning Guide Outcomes

SECP Collaboration

- 1. What is the level of collaboration between the Institute and program stakeholders?
- 2. What are the barriers and facilitators for collaboration between the Institute and program stakeholders?

Leadership Effectiveness

- 1. What effect does the SECP have on principal leadership?
- 2. What effect do SECP leadership activities (i.e., action planning, birth through grade 3 workshops) have on district-level goals?

Instructional Excellence

1. What effect does the SECP have on classroom practices?

Family and Community Partnerships Engagement

- 1. What effect does the SECP have on how family facilitators, community facilitators and/or home visitors engage with families?
- 2. What effect does the SECP have on family perceptions of family engagement?

Additional Efforts

PD for All

- 1. What is the reach of the "bite-size" PD for All approach?
- 2. If and how are early childhood educators implementing knowledge learned?
- 3. What are the best practices and barriers to new knowledge implementation within instructional settings?

Instructional Toolkit

- 1. What is the work group's self-efficacy for tool implementation through the lens of self-efficacy theory?
- 2. How does the workgroup experience influence perceptions of the six essential child experiences?
- 3. What are the best practices and barriers to workgroup program implementation?

SECP Collaboration

- 1. What is the level of collaboration between the Institute and program stakeholders?
- 2. What are the barriers and facilitators for collaboration between the Institute and program stakeholders?

In the Spring of 2023, Evaluators within the Munroe Meyer Institute conducted an external collaboration evaluation between the Buffett Early Childhood Institute and its key partners within the Superintendents' Early Childhood Plan. The two primary objectives of the evaluation were (1) to determine the level of collaboration between the Institute and plan stakeholders within school districts and (2) to determine the barriers and facilitators for collaboration between the Institute and plan stakeholders. A total of 59 surveys were completed by plan stakeholders across 9 school districts (6 full-implementation districts, 3 customized assistance), followed by 12 interviews. Survey respondents included 3-to-5 year-old classroom educators/paraprofessionals (n=10), Home Visitors/Family Facilitators (n=15), school-based leaders (n=13), and district-based administrators (n=21). Interviewees included: Home Visitors/Family Facilitators (n=3), school-based administrators (n=4), and district-based administrators (n=5). Twelve Institute staff members also engaged in a similar survey, with 10 staff members participating in a follow-up interview. Key findings are shared in the following report.



SURVEY FINDINGS

A survey was developed in collaboration between a Munroe Meyer Institute Education and Child Development Faculty member and Buffett Early Childhood Institute Research and Evaluation Staff. The District survey was comprised of 21 closed/open-ended questions and included an adapted version of a previously validated "Level of Collaboration" scale.* Questions were developed based on the Action Plan program domains of focus noted below. Respondents were asked to identify the level of collaboration they believe they have had with Institute Staff and with other Districts within the Superintendents' Early Childhood Plan in each of the following areas. Institute staff members were given a similar survey and asked to identify level of collaboration with Districts as a whole. Mean and standard deviations were calculated for each survey item.

PROGRAM DOMAINS OF FOCUS

Leadership Effectiveness

District Organization and Capacity

School Leadership Instructional Excellence

Foundations for Early Learning

Essential Child Experiences

Family and Community Partnership Engagement

Family Focus

Community-School
Connections

LEVEL OF COLLABORATION

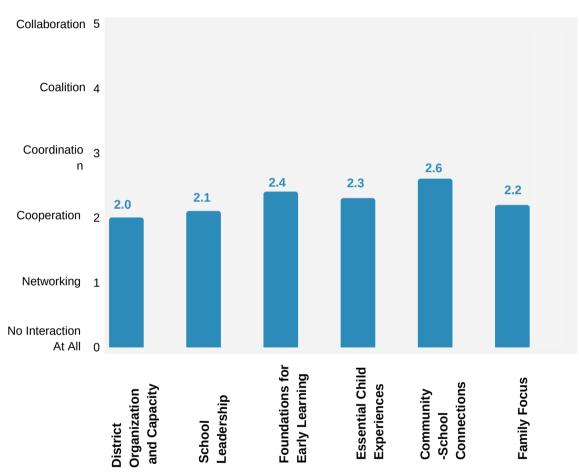
Networking	Cooperation	Coordination	Coalition	Collaboration
1	2	3	4	5
-Loosely	-Provide	-Share	-Share ideas,	-Frequent and
defined roles	information to	information and	information,	strategic
-Little	each other	resources	and resources	communication
communication	-Somewhat	-Defined roles	-Regular and	-Mutual trust
-All decisions	defined roles	-Regular	focused	-Shared
are made	-Formal	communication	communication	decision
independently	communication	-Some shared	-Frequent	making in all
	-All decisions	decision	shared	decisions
	are made	making	decision	-Consensus
	independently		making	reached in all
				decisions

^{*}Survey adapted from: Frey, B. B., Lohmeier, J. H., Lee, S. W., & Tollefson, N. (2006). Measuring collaboration among grant partners. American journal of evaluation, 27(3), 383-392.

INSTITUTE STAFF SURVEY FINDINGS

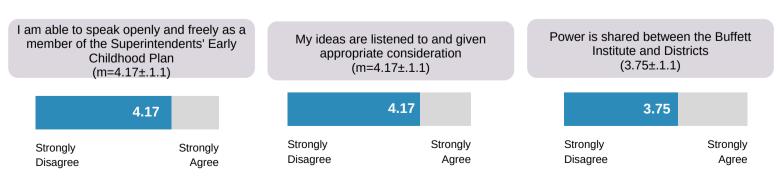
Institute Staff members were asked to identify the level of collaboration they have with all district/school stakeholders on a scale of 0-5 (0=no interaction at all; 5=collaboration) across the action plan domain constructs. **Institute collaboration** perceptions had a mean of 2.2 indicating a level of **cooperation** was typical.

Level of Collaboration



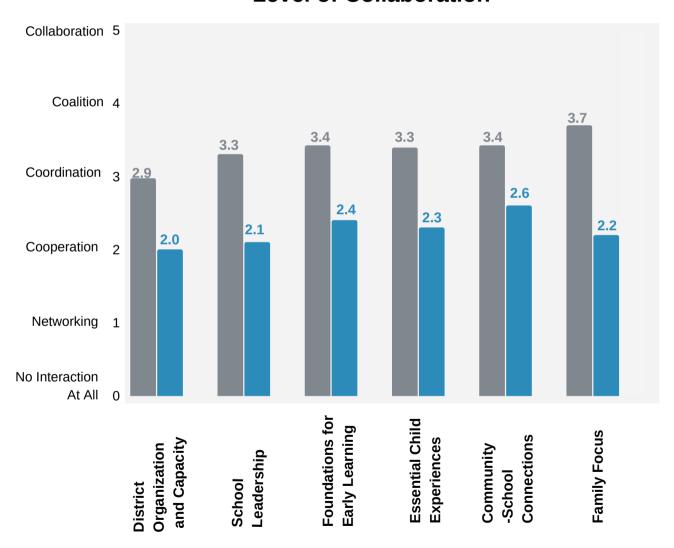
Institute staff (n=12) were asked to rate the level to which they agreed or disagreed with the following statements.

Agreement was based on a 5-point scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5).



School/District Program stakeholders involved in the action planning process (n=33) were asked to identify the level of collaboration **they have with one another** on a scale of 0-5 (0=no interaction at all; 5=collaboration) across the action plan domain constructs. Findings for full implementation district respondents (n=6 districts) can be seen below in **grey**. These districts included Bellevue, DC West, Millard, Omaha Public Schools, Ralston and Westside. Findings for Institute respondents can be seen in **blue**. Overall, full implementation district respondents typically identified higher rates of collaboration than Institute staff. **Full-implementation district collaboration** perceptions had a mean of 3.3 indicating efforts typically fell within the **coalition** level. **Institute collaboration** perceptions had a mean of 2.2 indicating a level of **cooperation** was typical.

Level of Collaboration



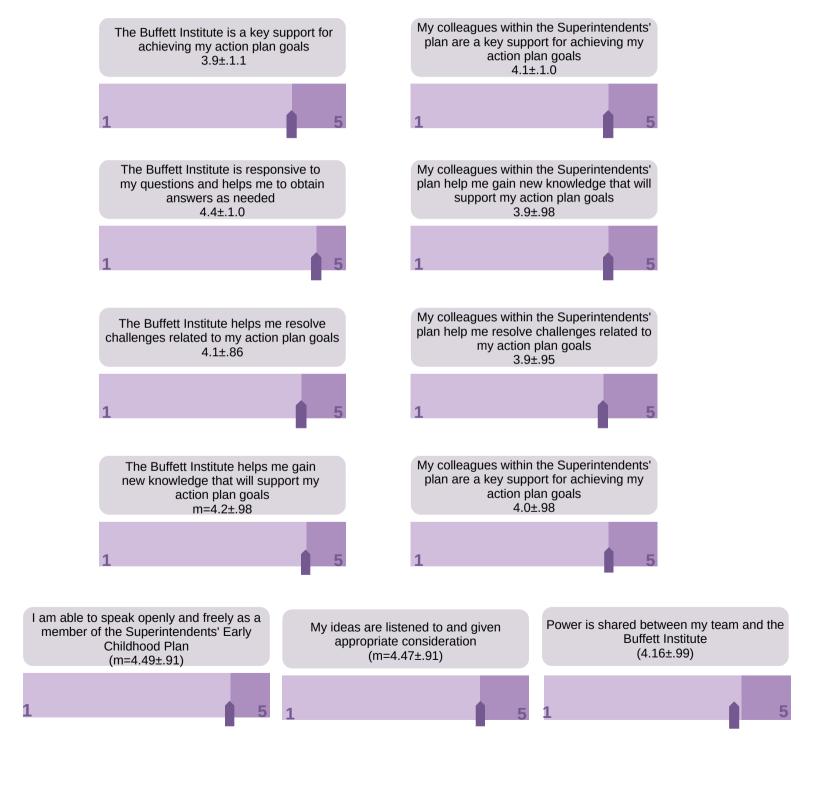
FULL IMPLEMENTATION DISTRICTS SURVEY FINDINGS

The following figures describe the level of collaboration **full implementation district respondents (n=33) believed they have with other districts** in the Superintendents' Early Childhood Plan (0=no interaction at all, 1=networking, 2=cooperation, 3=coordination, 4=coalition, and 5=collaboration). *Only individuals that self-identified as involved in the action planning process answered the following questions.* Overall, the average response mean was 1.7. This indicates that districts typically identified as **"networking"** with other districts.



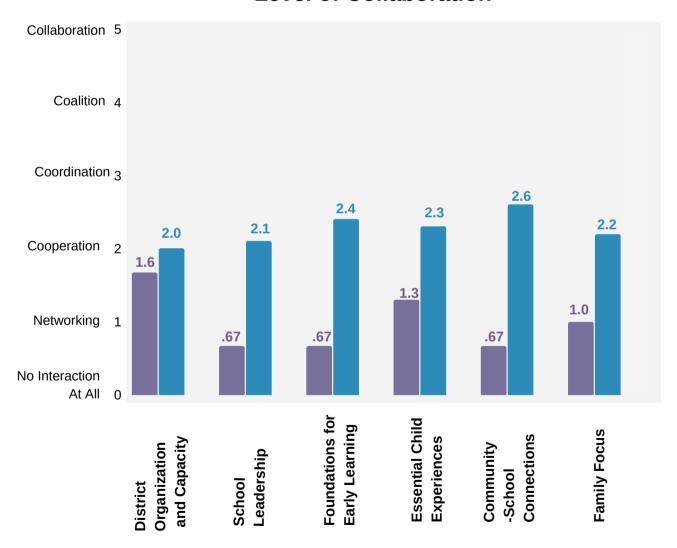
FULL IMPLEMENTATION DISTRICTS SURVEY FINDINGS

Plan stakeholders from full implementation districts (n=45) were asked to rate the level to which they agreed or disagreed with the following statements. Agreement was based on a 5-point scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). The strongest level of agreement was related to being able to speak openly and freely as a member of the Superintendents' Early Childhood Plan (m=4.49±.91). The lowest level of agreements were noted in the following statements: the Institute is a key support for achieving action plan goals (3.9±.1.1) and colleagues within the Superintendents' plan help to resolve challenges related to action plan goals (3.9±.95) although responses were still at the level of "somewhat agree". Additional mean and standard deviation findings are reported below.



District program stakeholders (n=3) were asked to identify the level of collaboration **they have with one another** on a scale of 0-5 (0=no interaction at all; 5=collaboration) across the action plan domain constructs. Findings for districts engaged in customized assistance (n=3 districts) can be seen in **purple**. These districts included Bennington, Elkhorn and Papillion La Vista. Findings for Institute respondents can be seen in **blue**. Customized assistance district perceptions had a mean of .99 indicated a collaboration level of **networking**. **Institute collaboration** perceptions had a mean of 2.2 indicating a level of **cooperation** was typical. *Importantly, Institute staff were asked to identify the overall level of collaboration with all districts served. Institute staff were not asked to discuss collaboration with customized assistance and full implementation districts separately.*

Level of Collaboration



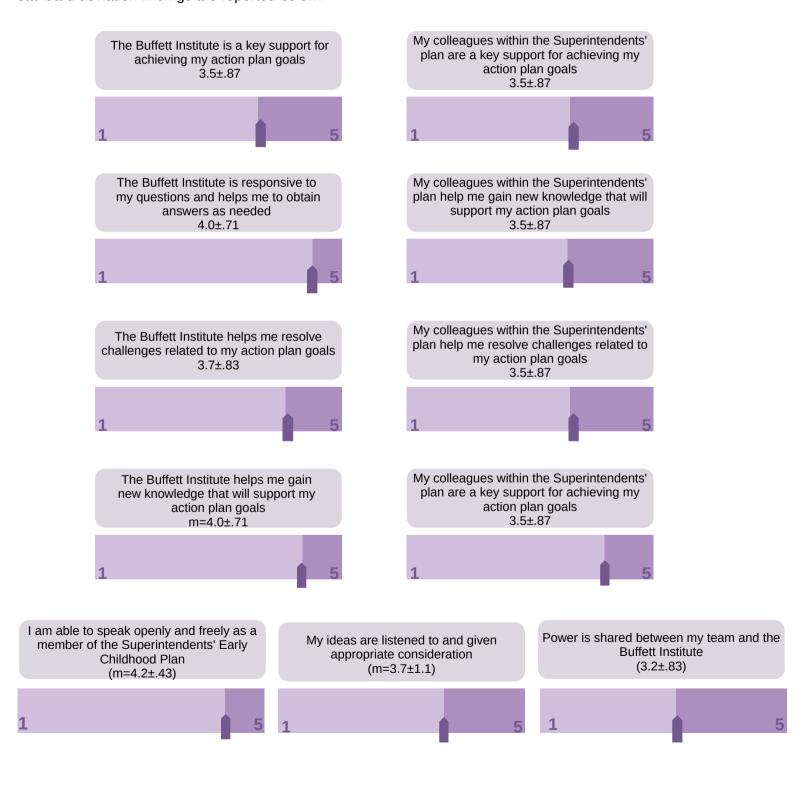
CUSTOMIZED ASSISTANCE DISTRICT SURVEY FINDINGS

The following figures describe the level of collaboration **customized assistance district respondents (n=3 districts) believed they have with other districts** in the Superintendents' Early Childhood Plan (0=no interaction at all, 1=networking, 2=cooperation, 3=coordination, 4=coalition, and 5=collaboration). Overall, the average response mean was .33. This indicates that districts typically responded as "no interaction at all" across action plan domains.



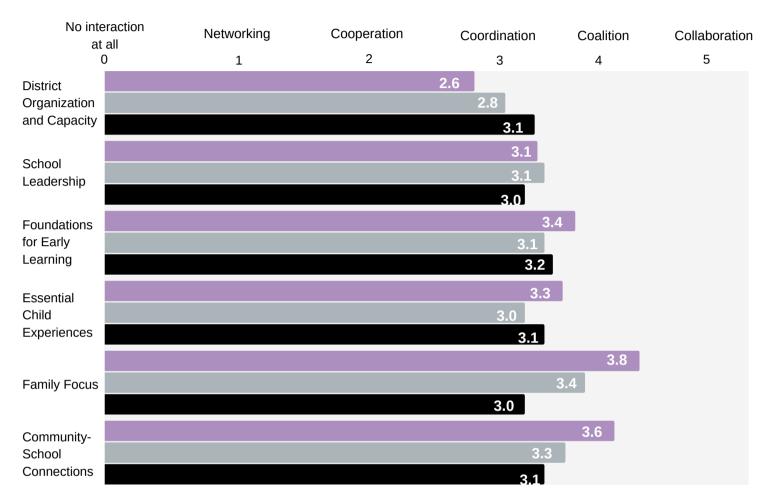
CUSTOMIZED ASSISTANCE DISTRICT SURVEY FINDINGS

Plan stakeholders from customized assistance districts (n=4) were asked to rate the level to which they agreed or disagreed with the following statements. Agreement was based on a 5-point scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). The strongest level of agreement was related to being able to speak openly and freely as a member of the Superintendents' Early Childhood Plan (m=4.2±..43). The lowest level of agreement was noted in the following statement: power is shared between my team and the Buffett Institute (3.2±.83). Additional mean and standard deviation findings are reported below.

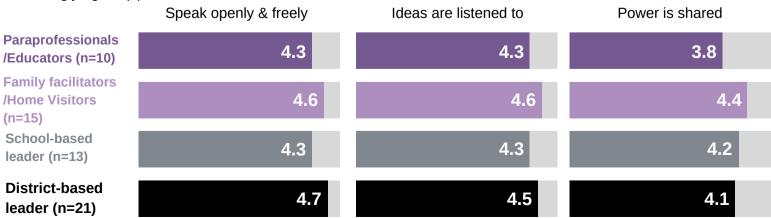


COMPARISON OF FINDINGS BY STAKEHOLDER TYPE

A comparison analysis for the level of collaboration **between the Institute and all districts** (full implementation and customized assistance) across action plan domains was completed across district stakeholder type. Responses were split into 3 groups: (1) family facilitator/home visitor (n=11), (2) school-based leader (n=7), and (3) district-based leader (n=18), only individuals that self-identified as engaged in the action planning process answered the collaboration scale questions. Mean findings were based on a scale of 0-5 (0=no interaction at all, 5=collaboration).



Findings are separated by District stakeholder type for the following: (1) School and District staff are able to speak openly and freely as members of the Superintendents' Early Childhood Plan, (2) School and District staff ideas are listened to and their ideas are given appropriate consideration, and (3) Power is shared between the Buffett Institute and School and District staff. Agreement was based on a 5-point scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5)



SUMMARY OF QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS

Institute staff members typically identified collaboration with districts involved in the Superintendents' Early Childhood Plan to fall within a level of "cooperation". Full implementation districts typically perceived collaboration with Institute staff to fall within the "coalition" level. Customized assistance districts typically identified collaboration to be occurring at the "networking" level.

When considering an agreement scale of 1-5 (1=strongly disagree, 2=somewhat disagree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 4= somewhat agree, and 5=strongly agree), Institute respondents "somewhat agreed" that the Institute and districts effectively share power (mean=3.75) and that District staff ideas are listened to and given appropriate consideration (mean=4.17). Full implementation districts had higher levels of agreement and identified a mean of 4.16 related to power being shared between the Institute and districts and a mean of 4.49 related to being able to speak openly and freely as a member of the Superintendents' Early Childhood Plan. Customized assistance districts identified a mean of 3.2 related to power being shared and 4.2 related to the ability to speak openly and freely.

In addition, full implementation district staff and customized assistance staff typically somewhat agreed that Institute staff are responsive to questions, effective at resolving action plan goal-related challenges, and a key support for achieving action plan goals. Furthermore, all district respondents somewhat agreed that their colleagues within the Superintendents' Early Childhood Plan are a key support for action plan goal achievement, help them to gain new knowledge to support their action plan goals, and help to resolve challenges related to action plan goals. However, customized assistance districts means were typically lower (mean=3.5 vs 3.9) when considering Institute-specific questions (mean= 4.1 vs 3.8) and colleague-specific questions (mean=3.5 vs 3.9)

Specific to Action Plan domain constructs, full implementation district respondents and Institute respondents identified community-school connections (mean=3.4 vs. 2.6) to allow for the greatest level of collaboration with the Buffett Institute. Conversely, full implementation district respondents and Institute respondents reported the construct of District organization and capacity to have the lowest level of collaboration (mean=2.9 vs. 2.0). Customized assistance respondents identified district organization and capacity (mean=1.67) to have the highest level of collaboration with Institute staff.

When considering findings by all district stakeholder types, Family Facilitators/Home Visitors, School-based leaders, and District-based leaders reported collaborating with the Institute at the level of coordination (mean=3.3 vs. 3.1 vs. 3.1). When considering the ability to speak openly and freely as members of the Superintendents' Early Childhood Plan, District-based leaders reported the highest level of agreement on the 5-point scale with a mean response of 4.7, while paraprofessionals/educators and school-based leaders somewhat agreed (mean=4.3). All stakeholder types somewhat or strongly agreed that their ideas were listened to and given appropriate consideration, with District-based leaders and Family Facilitators/Home Visitors having the highest levels of agreement (mean=4.5 vs. 4.6). Finally, all stakeholder types agreed power was somewhat shared between the Buffett Institute and school and District staff, with paraprofessionals and educators reporting the lowest level of agreement (mean=3.8) and Family Facilitators/Home Visitors reporting the highest (mean=4.4).

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QUALITATIVE FINDINGS

Qualitative information was gathered from the open-ended survey questions within the District and Institute surveys and from subsequent interviews that took place with 10 Institute staff members and 12 full implementation district stakeholders (3 home visitors, 4 school-based administrators, 5 District-based administrators). Open-ended survey questions focused on benefits, strengths, accomplishments, and challenges of engagement in the Superintendents' Early Childhood Plan. Interview questions asked participants similarly focused questions but also asked individuals to expand on survey responses with respect to progress, challenges, and opportunities related to each program domain area (i.e., Leadership Effectiveness, Instructional Excellence, and Family & Community Partnership Engagement). Qualitative data were analyzed via a process of immersion and crystallization using a deductive content analytic approach. Overlapping survey and interview findings were combined in an open coding process. Three evaluators split initial transcription coding and met to discuss thematic findings. A qualitative expert then reviewed all codes and findings until a consensus was reached.

GREATEST BENEFITS OF ENGAGEMENT IN THE SUPERINTENDENTS' EARLY CHILDHOOD PLAN DISTRICT PERSPECTIVE

There were three primary themes found related to benefits of engagement in the Superintendents' Early Childhood Plan from the perspectives of District stakeholders. These included (1) a shared focus between the Institute and school districts, (2) increased family engagement, and (3) access to resources and supports. The following quotes highlight these findings:

- (1) "A renewed strong focus on the importance of early childhood. The ongoing partnership helps us keep our focus on this work and provides excellent resources for the work."
- -District Administrator
- (2) "The most beneficial part is seeing more family engagement at our school than ever and creating a safe space for families."
- -District Family Facilitator
- (3) "Having an outside support system to help develop leaders, teachers, and students in the work of the SECP."
- -District Administrator

GREATEST ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE SUPERINTENDENTS' EARLY CHILDHOOD PLAN

Reaching Families Before School Years

"One of the biggest things is really reaching the families prior to them coming into school, when they are...under five, having them feel they are welcome at school and part of the [school name] family"

-School Administrator

DISTRICT PERSPECTIVE

Value of the Birth to 3rd Grade Approach
"I automatically think of that prenatal through third grade..in all
decisions, it's not an afterthought anymore"
-School Administrator

Value of the Birth to 3rd Grade Approach

"10 years ago someone understood the importance of early childhood, the need for us to be successful as a community here in Omaha, Nebraska"

-Institute Staff Member

A Mind for Equity

"One of our goals is to close the opportunity gap. I feel like in some schools and districts we've seen that awareness of cultural responsiveness of parent and family engagement and all of these things that have now become built into a system instead of sprinkling equity on top"

-Institute Staff Member

INSTITUTE PERSPECTIVE

GREATEST STRENGTHS OF THE SUPERINTENDENTS' EARLY CHILDHOOD PLAN

Effective Support

"Getting great support from Buffett, always feeling like we matter no matter what our role is" -Home Visitor

DISTRICT PERSPECTIVE

Open Communication

"Their [Institute's] willingness to listen, meet our needs, and be a partner who is willing to help"

-District Administrator

Access to Subject Matter Experts

"We are able to tap into subject-matter experts to further our training" -District Administrator

Trust and Relationships

"It varies by district, but the greatest strength is actual trust and relationship building that has happened over these last few months. I believe this is the foundation for future success"

-Institute Staff Member

Shared Vision Between Institute and Districts

"[There is a] shared mission and commitment to the children and families in Douglas and Sarpy Counties. Collective action toward improvement in early childhood programming and systems"

-Institute Staff Member



GREATEST CHALLENGES OF THE SUPERINTENDENTS' EARLY CHILDHOOD PLAN

Balancing Expectations

"Trying to balance the expectations of Buffett and our school to ensure we meet everyone's needs"

-Family Facilitator

DISTRICT PERSPECTIVE

<u>Clarity of Expectations</u>

"The new plan has promise but still isn't fully clear.
[We] just need time and to build the connections with the right
people and see how we can make it work for us"

-District Administrator

Time Commitment

"Time commitment. This is an important component to our school/district plan but it can be very time consuming for me"
-Principal

Communication

"Communication! We have not been included in the district-level communication and invites to meetings are inconsistent. It is confusing who the leads are in the districts I work in"

-Institute Staff Member

Clarity of Expectations

"[There is] inconsistency in Institute expectations, they vary from district to district" -Institute Staff Member

Clarity of Outcomes

"Undefined outcomes or ways of measuring success.

Priorities are constantly being shifted and changed.

[There are] unclear expectations"

-Institute Staff Member



LEADERSHIP EFFECTIVENESS

Interviewees were asked to identify how the Institute has supported progress related to leadership effectiveness goals as well as any challenges they experienced. In addition, interviewees were asked how they would like their districts to make improvements related to leadership effectiveness in future years.

Construct	District Perspective	Institute Perspective	
Progress	District-based administrators believe School-based leaders are grounded in the Birth-to-3rd-grade approach and appropriate professional development has been given to allow for buy-in. "They [Principals] take that full leadership because now they not only have the knowledge, they have the confidence on how to bridge that gap, meet with staff and be engrained with the whole school" -District Administrator	Institute staff report the utilization and integration of evidence-based strategies to be beneficial to progress. Specifically, the Community of Practice available to principals was identified multiple times as a positive aspect of this domain. "I'm really proud of the work done in this area. There's a couple of districts that have taken the work and really integrated it into their principal leadership" -Institute Staff Member	
Challenges	Time and follow-through were identified as challenges. Administrators felt that while buy-in was apparent, competing demands sometimes stalled progress. Interviewees identified the COVID-19 pandemic as a key influencer for competing priorities. "The challenge I feel is for the Institute. This work is 100% what they doit is one small piece of a much larger puzzlewe have many priorities competing for our time and attention" -District Administrator	Institute staff reported the alignment of leadership goals to school-wide goals can be a challenge. Some Institute staff members identified principals as having different goals than other district staff members while others reported issues of district staff or district buyin. In addition, time as a barrier was commonly mentioned. "The Principal might be ready to start addressing things, but the district is not ready" -Institute Staff Member	
Future Strategies	There was a desire among interviewees to disseminate the knowledge principals had obtained from the Community of Practice to principals at other schools as well as at the teacher/paraprofessional level. "I think just kind of share that visionspread the knowledge and the wealthI want to expand it from my school to all the elementary principals" -School Administrator	Institute staff members want to continue to find ways for districts to collaborate with one another regarding how they are implementing strategies learned with the Community of Practice. "Just the districts continuing to share ideas that work for themthe districts being able to share and collaborate on how things work and what we can do to make it work [at another district]" -Institute Staff Member	

INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE

Interviewees were asked to identify how the Institute has supported progress related to Instructional Excellence goals as well as any challenges they experienced. In addition, interviewees were asked how they would like their districts to make improvements related to Instructional Excellence in future years.

Construct	District Perspective	Institute Perspective		
Progress	School and District administrators identified the implementation of social-emotional professional development opportunities and curriculums as signs of progress. Several districts reported implementing a new curriculum or providing a new educator training. "They [Institute] chose the curriculum we use and we use it across [district name]. Then I got training on it in my one on ones with [Institute staff]. If I ever have questions about how to implement thingsshe's very helpful with that" -District Administrator	Institute staff noted there were diverse opportunities in place for educators to receive professional development through opportunities such as PD for All, Instructional Toolkits and Coaching. In addition, staff felt they were starting to understand how to best meet needs across districts. "There are some common themes that are showing in all of the districts, that's really allowing us to become an expert at what we're delivering" -Institute Staff Member		
Challenges	Interviewees report challenges translating knowledge into practice. Individuals stated school-based personnel were receiving additional education/training/curriculums but sometimes struggled to implement these changes. "We have the training, we just don't know how to connect it" -School Staff Member	In addition to the challenges of time and teacher workload, a challenge discussed by some was a concern for information overload for educators. Some worried that the professional development opportunities provided may not be leading to substantial changes in practice. "Maybe we are trying to do too much and not go deep enough" -Institute Staff Member		
Future Strategies	Interviewees would like to develop new solutions to support educators and paraprofessionals to effectively engage in the evidence-based strategies they have learned. "How do we build off of what we have done this year and continue to make sure that we're providing that equal PD [professional development] to teachers as well as our paraprofessionals because they work with students also?" -District Administrator	Institute staff report a desire to evaluate data collected in this domain with the schools they serve to allow for continuous improvement to occur. "Just take the time to look at it [data] and really go through that continuous improvement cycle. And it takes time. They have to come. You know, it takes time in addition to the school and team meetings that we have to really reflect and look at it" -Institute Staff Member		

FAMILY & COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP ENGAGEMENT

Interviewees were asked to identify how the Institute has supported progress related to family & community partnership engagement goals as well as any challenges they experienced. In addition, interviewees were asked how they would like their districts to make improvements related to family & community partnership engagement in future years.

Construct	District Perspective	Institute Perspective
Progress	School and District administrators identified increases in drop-in plays and socializations as something worth celebrating over the past year. In addition, interviewees report a solid foundation for family and community facilitators to build off of in future years. In addition, the resources the Institute is able to provide were reported as integral to current practices. "They [Institute] support us with training our staff when it comes to family and community partnerships. They're just the expert" -School Administrator	There was a level of agreement that the institute had effectively conveyed the importance of family and community partnership engagement to the schools and districts they work with. "I think the Institute has supported that effort [family & community partnership engagement] in showing the importance of starting early through home visitation and bringing that concept to schools" -Institute Staff Member
Challenges	Interviewees identified barriers such as parents' time, trust, and the COVID-19 pandemic as factors that negatively impact their ability to provide family engagement services to the degree they would like. "The families that we need to engage with the most are the hardestthe challenge has been finding ways to give a voice to families who historically have felt like they didn't have a voice at the school" -District Administrator	Institute staff reported competing priorities within some schools that can hinder progress in this domain. Staff noted that sometimes schools needed additional support to facilitate community engagement. "I think that there are some systems that make it difficult to promote family engagement and community engagement, and really, it's up to the districts to disassemble and recreate a system" -Institute Staff Member
Future Strategies	Future strategies that were discussed included: being flexible to parents needs, additional training, support for home visitors and developing plans to increase engagement in family-wide events. "It's not a one-size fit all, not all parents want the same thing, just to be able to hone in on what our parents need and give them multiple opportunities, different ways to show what engagement and true partnership looks like" -School Administrator	Institute staff would like to continue to find opportunities to develop programming that directly supports families diversity and allows for greater cultural considerations when developing engagement strategies. Staff members discussed the need for schools to meet the specific needs of the families they serve. Every district is different. What is your true definition of family engagement? What do you want it to look like and be able to confidently say these are the great things we do?" -Institute Staff Member

HOW CAN THE INSTITUTE SUPPORT FUTURE GOALS?

Support to Continue to Hone In on Program Focus
"Family engagement has been a huge part of the Buffett
Early Childhood Institute. I know there is a lot of insight and
knowledge and resources in that area and kind of asking
for their support with our teachers"

-School Administrator

DISTRICT PERSPECTIVE

Strategies to Align Program Goals with Ongoing Efforts
"I think sometimes things get duplicated between where we get
supports from...we action plan with [other organizations] and
sometimes it's hard to go to people to be like, let's join another

-District Administrato

Additional Concrete Support

"I feel like there is a lot of talk about philosophy and goals, but I don't feel like there is a lot of concrete examples or action steps to accomplish our goals"

-School Administrator

Continue to Develop Strategies for Accountability

"Maybe we could grow in the accountability space to make sure goals are moving forward. And when they are not, how do we address that?"

-Institute Staff Member

Greater Community Involvement

"Definitely getting the community more involved in what we do...Family/community is the bridge to academic success"

-Institute Staff Member

Continue to Try and Align School/District Goals with Domains
"I feel like being a little more intentional about making the
connection between the three domains, the three domains
should align with the goals"

-Institute Staff Member



SUMMARY OF QUALITATIVE FINDINGS

The Buffett Early Childhood Institute was perceived by District interviewees (n=12) as an effective source for information dissemination and expertise. District stakeholders reported they value the Birth-to-3rd-grade approach and believe a great accomplishment since program onset has been the ability to reach families before school begins. In addition, District respondents reported that they are well -equipped with the resources and/or curriculums they have received from the Institute and see Institute staff as expert leaders in their respective areas. By comparison, Institute staff (n=10) saw the greatest accomplishments of the Superintendents' Early Childhood Plan as the value placed on the Birth-to-3rd-grade approach, and a developing foundation for ensuring equitable practices across districts.

Related to identified barriers, District interviewees identified challenges when trying to balance expectations of the Institute with expectations of their schools and districts. Both Institute and District interviewees desired enhanced clarity of programmatic expectations. However, several reported that clarity had improved over the course of the 2022-2023 academic year. When considering barriers within the domains of Leadership Effectiveness, Instructional Excellence, and Family & Community Partnership Engagement, time, workload, and translation of new knowledge into practice was prevalent across Action Plan domains. This knowledge translation refers not only to principals sharing information learned with teachers and paraprofessionals but also to Home Visitors and/or Family/Community Facilitators translating information and/or curriculums learned with families. In addition, there was some concern that information overload could be hindering translation of knowledge into practice. Once again, aligning program priorities across schools and districts was commonly discussed as a barrier across domains.

Related to leadership effectiveness, District and Institute interviewees indicated that they would like to enhance collaboration among District leaders as well as improve strategies for disseminating knowledge learned from the Principals' Community of Practice. Specific to instructional excellence, there was a desire from Institute leaders to use data more strategically to improve programmatic efforts, and District interviewees wanted to find ways to build on the professional development received over the past year. Finally, with regard to family & community partnership engagement, District interviewees wanted to maintain flexibility to meet families where they are and Institute staff wanted to build on efforts to ensure culturally considerate programming.

Overall, it was reported by District interviewees that the Institute can continue to support school and district progress by helping schools hone in on their program focuses. In addition, Districts indicated they would like more concrete support for their educators to support translation of philosophy into practical strategies. Institute representatives believed the Institute should continue to find ways to help districts maintain accountability for their action plan goal progress as well as increase community involvement and buy-in for programmatic efforts. Once again, Institute and District interviewees reported a desire to develop strategies to align programmatic strategies within the Superintendents' Early Childhood Plan with ongoing school priorities and curriculums.

Leadership Effectiveness

1. What effect does the SECP have on principal leadership?

A self-reflective assessment from the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) was disseminated to Principals from 8 Omaha-based schools. This survey tool measured progress made within the Principals' monthly community of practice meetings that took place with the Buffett Early Childhood Institute. The community of practice focused on 2 NAESP competencies ("Develop and foster partnerships with families and communities" and "Ensure equitable opportunities".) Principals were asked to complete a self-reflective assessment at two time points (January & May). Reflective assessments provided several constructs and asked respondents to rate themselves on a scale of (1) highly inaccurate, (2) inaccurate, (3) accurate or (4) highly accurate.

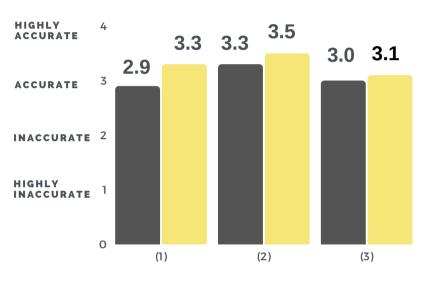


National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) Self-Reflective Assessment

Survey findings for all participating Principals

Mean scores are reported in the report below at each time point with pre scores reported in Grey and post scores reported in Yellow.

COMPETENCY 2: DEVELOP AND FOSTER PARTNERSHIPS WITH FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

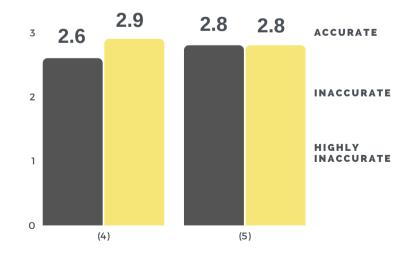


Strategy 2.1: Engage intentionally with families, especially those who have been traditionally marginalized.

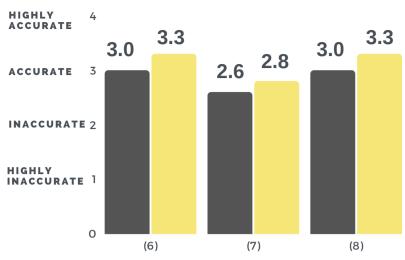
- (1) As a principal, I have full awareness and understanding of the varied needs that exist for my students Birth through 3rd grade and their families.
- (2) There are dedicated spaces in our school to encourage families to visit and collaborate with others.
- (3) Our school enacts a communication plan that includes multiple strategies to partner with families and provides services and supports to families depending on their individual needs (e.g., home language, disability status).

Strategy 2.2: Establish relationships and support collaboration with early care and education, including home visitors. Birth to entering school (ECE) programs in the community

- (4) I am familiar with and have established relationships with ECE programs in my community.
- (5) Our school provides opportunities and supports to kindergarten teachers to meet with ECE teachers staff (both those on-site and in community-based programs and including home visitors).



COMPETENCY 2: DEVELOP AND FOSTER PARTNERSHIPS WITH FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

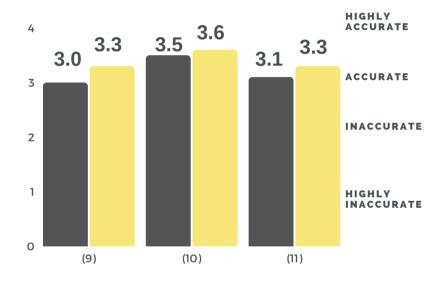


Strategy 2.3: Ensure smooth transitions for students and families not only between the variety of ECE programs and kindergarten, but also across the birth through 3rd grade continuum.

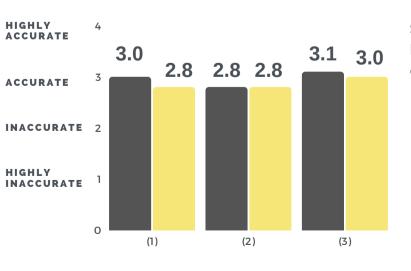
- (6) Our school has a transition plan in place to welcome and embrace students and families new to our school.
- (7) We reach out to and partner with ECE programs and community organizations to support the transitions of students and families.
- (8) We have a well-defined, manageable, and shared process to help parents register at our school. (i.e., supportive of languages other than English

Strategy 2.4: Facilitate linkages with community supports and services to meet the needs of Birth-3rd grade students and families.

- (9) I am aware of or know where to find community supports that will meet the needs of all students and their families.
- (10) As a school, we have defined a process and identified dedicated personnel to serve as family liaisons to inform/coordinate external support for families with Birth through 3rd grade students.
- (11) Our students are provided with opportunities to participate in a variety of enrichment learning activities outside of the school day and during the summer.



COMPETENCY 4: ENSURE EQUITABLE OPPORTUNITIES

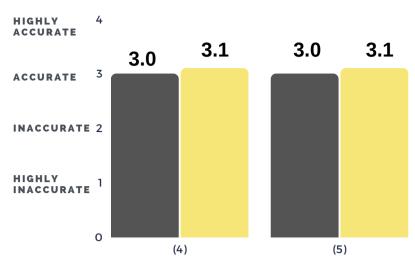


Strategy 4.1: Develop critical self-awareness and knowledge of oppression, privilege, and cultural competence.

- (1) As a leader, I engage in professional learning to examine how race and privilege impact my own values, beliefs, perceptions, leadership, and decisionmaking.
- (2) I have developed, and regularly revisit, my own personal action plan to develop my capacity to be an equity-minded leader.
- (3) I engage in conversations with students, families, and staff to better understand their perspectives and experiences pertaining to race, culture, socioeconomic status, and gender identity.

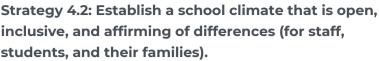
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COMPETENCY 4: ENSURE EQUITABLE OPPORTUNITIES

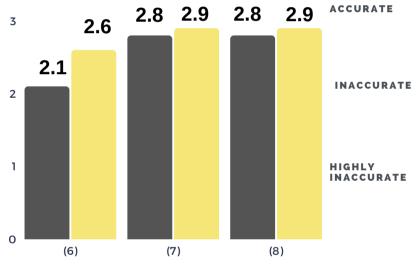


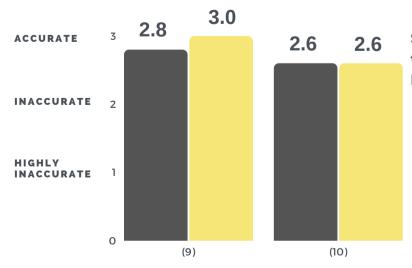
Strategy 4.3: Facilitate linkages with community supports and services to meet the needs of Birth-3rd grade students and families.

- (6) As a school, we have conducted an equity audit with a team of stakeholders that mirrors the demographics of the school. We have examined a wide range of data and used this information to identify areas of disproportionality and disparities.
- (7) To focus on equity in Birth through 3rd grade, we
 intentionally examine data related to enrollment in
 home visiting, suspension/expulsion, attendance,
 inclusion of children with disabilities, access for dual
 language and English learners, and engagement of
 diverse family voices.
- (8) As a school, we have developed an on-going process to monitor the implementation of equity measures, examine new data, and evaluateprogress with an equity lens to inform our continuous improvement process.



- (4) I have established trusting, respectful relationships with all stakeholder groups to create a climate that is open, equity focused, and affirming of difference.
- (5) As a school, we engage in professional learning that improves our culturally responsive and sustaining practices to help staff create learning environments that are inclusive and identity affirming for students Birth through 3rd grade.





Strategy 4.4: Differentiate resources and strategies to ensure students, teachers, staff, and families have equitable opportunity to succeed.

- (9) I am aware of inequities that exist in my school and can identify how these disparities show up in programming, student achievement, resource allocation, and family engagement.
- (10) As a school, we have established clear ways for traditionally marginalized Birth through 3rd grade families to share their perspectives, ideas, and concerns, thereby informing the adjustment of school practices and policies.

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Leadership Effectiveness

2. What effect do SECP leadership activities (i.e., action planning, birth through grade 3 workshops) have on district-level goals?

During the annual Action Planning Retreats within the Superintendents' Early Childhood Plan, focus groups were held with full implementation Districts (Bellevue Public Schools, DC West Community Schools, Millard Public Schools, Omaha Public Schools, Ralston Public Schools and Westside Community Schools. District team members were asked to reflect on their engagement in the Superintendents' Early Childhood Plan over the past year. A 5-question semi-structured interview guide was utilized to evaluate progress, challenges and future directions within the three primary program domains of Leadership Effectiveness, Instructional Excellence and Family & Community Partnerships Engagement.



Qualitative data were analyzed by Evaluators within the Munroe Meyer Institute. Evaluators transcribed focus group recordings verbatim and engaged in a process of immersion/crystallization of findings. Data was coded using a deductive coding framework in which codes were collapsed into categories based on the established questions. The following report shares findings from all focus groups.

PROGRESS MADE IN 2022-2023

Individuals were asked to rate their self-perceived progress for their action plan goals in each domain on a scale of 1-100. If multiple ratings were given within one district, the mean scale score was utilized. The mean score across all six districts can be seen below. Family and Community Partnerships Engagement related goals were identified to have the greatest progress with a mean progress score of 83.8 out of 100 being provided. Leadership effectiveness had the lowest mean progress score with a score of 70.8 out of 100.

LEADERSHIP EFFECTIVENESS (70.8)



INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE (79.6)



FAMILY & COMMUNITY
PARTNERSHIPS
ENGAGEMENT
(83.8)



LEADERSHIP EFFECTIVENESS

Focus group participants were asked to discuss progress and challenges specific to each domain within the action plan. Findings related to progress and challenges for each domain (Leadership Effectiveness, Instructional Excellence and Family and Community Partnerships Engagement can be seen below.

Construct	Identified Themes	Example Quotes		
Progress	Effective professional development has been given to school/district leadership Individuals felt the professional development opportunities provided to school/district leadership enhanced understanding and appreciation for the Birth to Grade 3 approach. A solid foundation has been laid Respondents believed a foundation has been set to allow leadership to effectively build relationships with school staff and to support staff's ability to engage with students and families	"We were presentingwhat are our foundations of early childhood and how what we're doing now will effect long-term in terms of developing that socialemotional awareness and equipping both kids and adults with the skills necessary." "I like that we had a system in place We're having the ability to have those conversations [about early childhood] and really set aside some time to — in a busy year — to have some really specific focus."		
Challenges	Time is limited A lack of time was frequently discussed as a key barrier to action plan progress. Competing demands at the district and school level were often identified Leadership Staff Capacity Districts reported leadership staff capacity to limit goal progress due to staff buy-in, staff turnover and staff capacity while addressing competing demands.	"I think a challenge with all of this work is, it kind of goes back to that time piece. This is competing with a whole lot of things that are priorities for a school." "One of our goals was to be able to do some personalized learning and some coaching. And just as I found myself covering more in classrooms and doing that and not as much time coaching except on the job or in the hallway type things, I know that the district felt that as well."		

INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE

Construct	Identified Themes	Example Quotes
Progress	Improved Early Childhood Knowledge Base Individuals felt that the curriculums implemented by the Institute and the coaching/professional development opportunities provided had increased school/district staff knowledge	"That's really helpful to have Buffett come in and help with the Second StepThat was incredible to have the consistency of that."
	Some interviewees reported that their teachers were meeting expectations of district leadership related to instructional practice. Others reported beginning to see growth from the curriculums and professional development opportunities that had been implemented over the past year.	"I feel like they [teachers] do exactly what we ask of them and they do an awesome job." "We worked a lot on those academic conversations and then pulled that into our play and learns, and we pulled that into our socialization groups."
Challenges	Time is limited • A lack of time to engage in new curriculums or implement new strategies learned was frequently acknowledged. Identifying the right strategies to support students • Respondents felt that students	"I think the biggest barrier again comes down to time to cover everything and really effectively support teachers in everything that they need to have to be effective teachers."
	required varied strategies for support especially since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Some districts desired further support from the Institute to help develop skills related to engaging learners	"You hear everyone say, like, post-COVID, kids are a little bit different and they're a little bit more on edge. And so I think we're we're dealing with behaviors and family structures that are different than what we might have had pre-COVID. And I do think teachers are feeling that."

FAMILY & COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS ENGAGEMENT

Construct	Identified Themes	Example Quotes
Progress	Community and Family Partnerships Have Improved • Every district felt that their engagement with families and/or community partners had increased over the past year. Some respondents felt their district had made great strides in increasing the number of community partnerships while others reported improved family relationships. Evidence cited for this included higher numbers of families enrolled in home visiting, increased attendance at school and/or school events and improved scores on the annual Family Engagement Survey.	"We hear from our kids in the classroom about these things all the time, going to the library, all the stuff you're doing [community events], our kids are talking about it. They love it." "Then I think it's back to the overall goal of families just feeling welcome in the school. The more they're relaxed the more they feel a partnership with the school, I think our outcomes only go up from there." "I think based on our measure [family engagement survey], we had great success for this. In terms of engagement, the amount of responses you've got on the family engagement surveytons of things to celebrate."
Challenges	 Improving trust between families and schools Several respondents reported difficulties engaging with families due to some families lack of trust or belief that they would benefit from services, such as home visiting. Multiple respondents felt the dynamic between schools and parents had shifted negatively since the COVID-19 pandemic. Developing Authentic Relationships with Families Some respondents felt the increases in family reach were apparent but there was still room for improvement related to the quality of the relationship with families. Multiple districts desired 	"I think the interest has shifted and the challenge to get people out of their comfort zone is more difficult because for the past two years it was acceptable for, 'Oh, you don't have to come out. Stay home and do everything virtually. We can keep a distance. It's dangerous to be together." I think we're asking families how they want to be engaged, which feels different than what they've experienced, and so that's a barrier. Even though it's the right way to approach it, it feels different.

additional support from the Institute in

this area.

FUTURE STRATEGIES

Focus group participants were asked to identify what they need to be successful in achieving their action plan goals for the 2023-2024 academic year. Findings from all districts can be seen below.

Leadership Effectiveness

- 1. Expand professional development opportunities to additional school/district staff
- 2. Enhance focus of action plan goal to make more achievable
- 3. Continue the Principal Community of Practice Meetings
- 4. Continue to engage with district/school staff to enhance buy-in of goal efforts



Family & Community Partnerships Engagement

- 1. Identify innovative strategies to improve quality and quantity of home visiting families
- 2. Develop strategies to improve quality of family partnerships
- 3. Increase community partnership outreach opportunities
- 4. Learn from existing strategies/Institute strategies that can leverage family partnerships effectively



Instructional Excellence

- 1. Continue training staff on foundational skills and scaffolding for educators
- 2. Continue to support implementation of evidence-based practices
- 3. Continue and enhance new social emotional learning curriculum efforts
- 4. Support educators ability to try new strategies and evaluate their impact



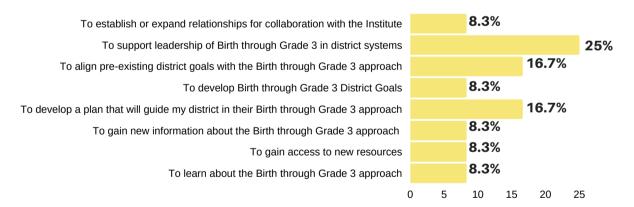
Leadership Effectiveness

Birth through Grade 3 Leadership Workshops

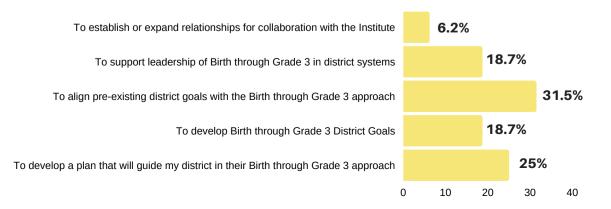
In the Summer of 2023, two Birth through Grade 3 leadership workshops took place with School Districts residing in the Douglas/Sarpy County area. The purpose of these workshops was to identify the current status of a district to assist in determining their readiness in implementing a Birth through Grade 3 approach. The first workshop took place with Papillion La Vista Community Schools on May 31st, 2023 and focused on the utilization of a P3 Audit Tool to support an internal assessment of birth through 3rd grade alignment to district policies, procedures and practices. The 2nd workshop took place on June 20th with administrators from Papillion La Vista Community Schools and Gretna Public Schools and focused on understanding the Buffett Early Childhood Institute's Birth through Grade 3 approach and to support building district cohesion related to the Birth through Grade 3 approach. A post-workshop survey was disseminated to participating individuals immediately following each workshop. The survey was designed to gather feedback related to workshop experience, impact and future directions. Descriptive findings for each survey can be seen below. The most common reason for participation cited in workshop 1 was "to support leadership of Birth through Grade 3 in district systems" (25%). The most common reason cited for participation in workshop 2 was "to align pre-existing district goals with the Birth through Grade 3 approach (31.5%).

MOST COMMON REASONS DISTRICTS CHOSE TO PARTICIPATE IN BIRTH THROUGH GRADE 3 LEADERSHIP WORKSHOPS

WORKSHOP 1 (N=7)



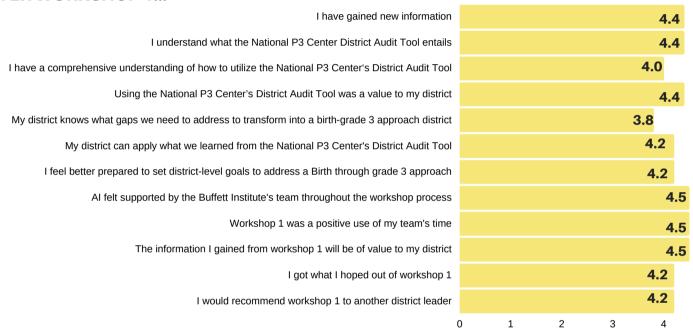
WORKSHOP 2 (N=6)



Workshop Evaluation Findings

Workshop participants were also asked to identify their level of agreement with the following statements on a 1-5 scale (1, strongly disagree, 5, strongly agree). Mean responses can be seen below. The highest level of agreement within Workshop 1 was found for the following statements: "I felt supported by the Buffett Institute's team throughout the workshop process (4.5); Workshop 1 was a positive use of my team's time (4.5) and the information I gained from workshop 1 will be of value to my district (4.5). The highest level of agreement from workshop 2 was the following item: "After workshop 2, I understand the Institute's Birth through Grade 3 approach"(4.3). The item with the lowest level of agreement after both workshops included: "my district know what gaps we need to address to transform into a Birth through grade 3 approach district (3.8 & 3.3).

AFTER WORKSHOP 1...



AFTER WORKSHOP 2...



Instructional Excellence

1. What effect does the SECP have on classroom practices?

Survey Overview

In the spring of 2023, a survey was disseminated to educators engaged in Professional Development within the Buffett Early Childhood Institute's Superintendent's Early Childhood Plan. Educators were asked to reflect on the evidence-based instructional practices and learning opportunities they had engaged in over the last year for evaluation purposes. This report highlights the descriptive findings from the survey.

100%

of survey respondents reported
that the instructional
opportunities they engaged in
during the 2022-2023 academic
year had been helpful to support
overall social-emotional
development of children in their
program

PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

- A total of 19 surveys were completed by educators and paraprofessionals from two school districts
- Respondents had worked with an Institute coach for an average of 7.2± 2.35 months
- 52.6% of respondents identified their current role as educator followed by 47.4% as paraprofessional
- 73.6% of respondents identified as Caucasian/White
- 57.9% of respondents had worked in early childhood for at least 5 years
- 94.4% of respondents typically supported preschool age children with one individual supporting kindergartners

MOST COMMON PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Participants were asked to identify what professional development opportunities they engaged in since June 2022. The top activities included:



One on One Coaching



Pyramid Model Training



TPOT Classroom Observations

Respondents were asked to identify the best part of receiving Professional Development through the Superintendent's Early Childhood Plan. Responses centered around effective strategies, resource sharing, and a supportive network.

"Getting the training and the support from the school. Being trained on effective strategies we use often with the students."

-Paraprofessional

"It [Coaching] helps to support student needs with additional resources and allows us to problemsolve when students have high needs or challenging behaviors."

-Educator

"Knowing that there is help whenever we need it, also giving us ideas we might not think of." -Paraprofessional

Classroom Related Skills

Educators were asked to rate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with statements related to engaging in evidence-based classroom-related skills. Respondents were asked to reflect on how their instructional practices have changed from before the current academic year (2022-2023) to the time of survey completion. Respondents were asked to rank survey items as Not Applicable or on a scale of 1-4 (1=Almost Never, 4=Almost Always). Mean scores are reported below for each time point. Practices before the 2022-2023 academic year are in **Green**, and current practices are noted in **Orange**. A few of the largest self-reported increases in agreement include "I use a visual schedule with children" and "I use a variety of strategies to help children learn social skills such as sharing and initiating play."



Child-Specific Skills

Educators were asked to identify if there was a child in their care with ongoing challenging behaviors. 100% of respondents reported "Yes" and were asked a series of child-specific questions. Respondents were asked to reflect on their practice before the 2022-2023 academic year and their current practice. Once again, educators were asked to mark Not Applicable or select an option on a scale of 1-4 (1=Almost Never, 4=Almost Always). Mean scores are reported below for each time point. Practices before the 2022-2023 academic year are in **Green**, and current practices are noted in **Orange**. The largest increases in agreement between the two timepoints were seen for "I use effective strategies to address this child's challenging behavior or social-emotional issues" and "I have coping skills that keep me calm when this child's behavior pushes my buttons."



Educator Perceptions

Educators were asked to reflect on their experience working with the Buffett Early Childhood Institute since June 2022. They were asked to rate from 1 to 5 (1=Strongly Disagree, 5=Strongly Agree) the extent to which they agreed with the following statements. Findings indicate:

57.8% of respondents somewhat agreed (15.7%) or strongly agreed (42.1%) the Institute changed the way they approach their instructional practice.

77.7% of respondents somewhat agreed (33.3%) or strongly agreed (44.4%) the Institute had given them new ideas for how to approach their instructional practice.

72.1% of respondents somewhat agreed (33.3%) or strongly agreed (38.8%) the Institute had given them new resources to use in their instructional practice.







Respondents were asked to identify the biggest challenge they have faced when changing their instructional practice over the past year. Typical responses focused on two general areas: time commitments for trainings and meetings and administrator/peer buy-in. Example quotes can be seen below.

"Making sure the staff is on the same page with regards to student needs and providing consistent supports." – Educator

"The extra trainings and meetings were time consuming." – Educator

In conclusion, educators and paraprofessionals self-report that their ability to engage in evidence-based practices increased over the 2022-2023 school year. Opportunities related to the Pyramid Model were most commonly reported, and survey respondents view the Institute as a supportive partner for resource dissemination and as a supportive network. Future consideration could be given to time management of professional development opportunities and developing strategies to encourage school-wide buy-in.

Family and Community Partnerships Engagement

1. What effect does the SECP have on how family facilitators, community facilitators and/or home visitors engage with families?

In April 2023, two focus groups took place with a cohort of home visitor/family facilitators and community facilitators (n=7). These individuals directly support efforts within the Superintendents' Early Childhood Plan. Individuals were interviewed in-person by Evaluators from the Munroe Meyer Institute and were asked to share their thoughts and experiences related to their current role. Questions were guided by constructs of Social Support Theory seen below. Focus group data were transcribed verbatim and entered into Nvivo qualitative analysis software. A constant comparative analysis was employed. This process involved three major stages which included: (1) open coding data into small units or chunks with a common descriptor or phrase (2) grouping codes into categories and (3) developing themes that express each grouping.

CONSTRUCT	DEFINITION
EMOTIONAL SUPPORT	Expressions of empathy, love, trust and caring
INSTRUMENTAL SUPPORT	Tangible aid and service
INFORMATIONAL SUPPORT	Advice, suggestions and information
APPRAISAL SUPPORT	Encouragement, information useful for self- evaluation

Individuals were asked to start the focus group by describing their roles and responsibilities within a typical day. Please note these varied based on type of role (i.e., community facilitator, family facilitator and/or home visitor. The following graph describes the most common responses.

"I don't know that I've had two days that are exactly the same in the whole year. My day always starts out with greeting kids at the front door, so I have morning duty. And then from there, it just depends on what's needed to be done. I have some socialization playgroups that happen during the week. I have some home visiting that happens during the week. I support the pre-K program when they need it. I have a clothing closet and a SNAP program..so every day looks different just depending on what's needed in the building. "-Reflection on typical day in current role



EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

Interviewees were asked to discuss the following (a) how they provide emotional support to the families they serve, (b) if there is any type of emotional support they wish they could provide but can't, (c) what resources they would need to provide additional emotional support and (d) what challenges they encounter when providing emotional support. The following themes were identified related to emotional support.

Identifying as a trusted resource

Interviewees felt they provided support for parents by being seen as a trusted resource that they could talk to. They reported parents saw them as a safe space to come to.

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Sometimes it's just holding space, holding space for parents, especially moms, who maybe don't have a good support system. And you are their person that they know they can kind of vent to and express their concerns to.

"

Concern that they are not enough

Interviewees report being concerned that their services are not enough for the families they work with. Individuals reported worrying about their families after work and wanting services such as therapy or counseling for both parents and children to be more easily accessible.



One challenge for me is a lot of these families could use counseling and sometimes finding a therapist or finding counselors in our community..that can be a challenge. In my case, my families are Spanish-speaking.

5

A desire to educate parents further

Related to resources needed to provide emotional support, there was a desire to learn more about how to support families when they were dealing with challenging behavior from a child.



It would really be nice to have like Conscious Discipline training or somebody that can have these [trainings] like once a quarter for these parents to come to.



INSTRUMENTAL SUPPORT

Interviewees were asked to discuss the following (a) how they provide instrumental support to the families they serve, (b) if there is any type of instrumental support they wish they could provide but can't, (c) what resources they would need to provide additional instrumental support and (d) what challenges they encounter when providing instrumental support. The following themes were identified related to instrumental support.

Sharing curriculum resources

Interviewees discussed various curriculums they provide to the families they serve. Some reported trying to eliminate resource barriers and bringing families the materials they needed to engage in curriculum-based activities at home.



I would say a lot of times even though our curriculum does encourage families to use things from their home, I do like to bring items because I don't want to assume that they have it or I don't want to send them on a wild goose chase in their home to have those resources.

Helping to meet basic needs

Some interviewees reported supporting or providing services that meet basic human needs such as a clothing closet for families, a backpack program, drive thru pantries or snack programs.



We have a clothing closet as well that we help run. Also backpacks. We have like a food to-go bag, so we stow them to help disburse them to families in need.

7

A desire to share more resources

Although one individual reported having a grant to support book purchases other individuals wished they could give families more books to take home. Others desired to bring in resources to meet the needs mothers face. For example, to bring in driving instructors to help mothers learn to drive or behavioral health specialists that could be made available to parents and children.



If we can provide like driving classes or like a driving instructor once a week, once a month, that'd be phenomenal to change those kids and mothers lives.

77

INFORMATIONAL SUPPORT

Interviewees were asked to discuss the following (a) how they provide informational support to the families they serve, (b) if there is any type of informational support they wish they could provide but can't, (c) what resources they would need to provide additional informational support and (d) what challenges they encounter when providing informational support. The following themes were identified related to informational support.

Providing feedback to parents related to child development

Interviewees reported that in addition to general information sharing through curriculum based learning they provided feedback to parents regularly. Some reported using developmental checklists to pinpoint areas of focus.

66

I think the developmental checklists are really helpful too..just to let them know like "you're doing great and look at how much they're growing" or on the flip side, if you have a little one where you may be concerned. A lot of the ASQ [ages and stages questionnaires] are really helpful, just to start conversations about screening.

77

Adjusting information to meet parents needs

Some individuals reported that they follow the parents lead when it comes to information sharing. This may influence whether paper copies are provided, how materials are translated or the tone of the conversation.



I feel like meeting their needs, like some parents do want physical printouts from like activity, their curriculum that we're using and some are like, don't give it to me because they literally leave it like just send me a picture or an email. So following their leads.

Having tough conversations

Some individuals reported no barriers to providing informational support. Others stated they were challenged by difficult conversations at times when trying to share information, especially with families of a child experiencing a developmental delay.



I'm starting to have a lot of families that have children with a delay...I had one mom, she was told that her son might have autism and that is an area I don't know enough about. So just kind of hearing her and seeing what kind of information she was given by the doctor and reassuring her not to stress too much, talk to the provider, get all the information you can. I think that is a challenge for me because I do not have experience or wouldn't know where to start.

APPRAISAL SUPPORT

Interviewees were asked to discuss the following (a) how they provide appraisal support to the families they serve, (b) if there is any type of appraisal support they wish they could provide but can't, (c) what resources they would need to provide additional appraisal support and (d) what challenges they encounter when providing appraisal support. The following themes were identified related to appraisal support.

Encouragement with verbal and nonverbal Communication

Interviewees report being a cheerleader for their families and finding ways to give encouragement through positive praise and reinforcement on a regular basis.



I would tell mom, "you are doing an amazing job". A smile, eye contact, showing interest in her and the children. Remind them you know, being a parent is challenging enough.

71

Improving upon ways to respond in emotional situations

A majority of interviewees reported a desire to further their knowledge related to child development discussions and tough conversations that can arise when parents have a concern.



It never hurts to have more training, a lot of people just need training on how to handle emotional moments or how to respond because sometimes people can respond in a way that could really damage a relationship.



A desire to provide praise in other ways

Some individuals noted they would like to be able to celebrate families accomplishments in other ways such as with small incentives. We do a lot of verbal [praise] or text messages for families like, "Oh my God, they just did it. They just went to the bathroom." We've been talking about potty training for months, and of course you celebrate. But wouldn't it be nice..to write a nice little card and have postage and maybe a gift card to buy underpants instead of just trying to get something donated..that would be amazing.

GREATEST ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Interviewees were also asked to identify their greatest accomplishment so far in their current role. Participants largely reported their greatest accomplishments to be linked to developing trusting relationships with parents/families and being seen as a source of support not only within schools but in the community as well. In addition, seeing children succeed developmentally was identified frequently as an accomplishment. Overall, there was a consensus that the work being done had value and was effective despite the barriers they faced.

I guess knowing this mom has faith in me and trusts me to help her and support her. When we celebrate together...like when her child gets into preschool and he's ready and he's reaching milestones, when they tell you about their lives without you even asking anymore.. you are more than just a social worker, you're a family to them.

I think my biggest accomplishment is just building the relationships with families. I think that's really the foundation of the program working, having that relationship where they are texting you and saying "o my gosh, look at what their [child] did". We're seeing those big milestones and little milestones and celebrating them together.

I feel like we really make strong partnerships. It's very odd that family just stop coming..typically they're there for the long run because they feel like you genuinely care and you want to work alongside them and they see the growth.

Family and Community Partnerships Engagement

2. What effect does the SECP have on family perceptions of family engagement?

An adaptation of the Road Map Family Engagement Survey (Ishimaru & Lott, 2015) was used to assess families' perceptions about collaboration among families, communities, and schools. Twelve items addressed six domains: Parent/Family Knowledge and Confidence, Welcoming and Culturally Responsive School Climate, Parent/Family Influence and Decision-Making, Family-Educator Trust, Family-Educator Communication, and Principal Leadership for Engagement. Parents rank items on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Surveys were distributed to families in the eight full implementation schools in an online format. Families enrolled in home visiting or family facilitation also received the surveys. The survey was available in 19 languages to accommodate the language needs of all the families at the participating schools.

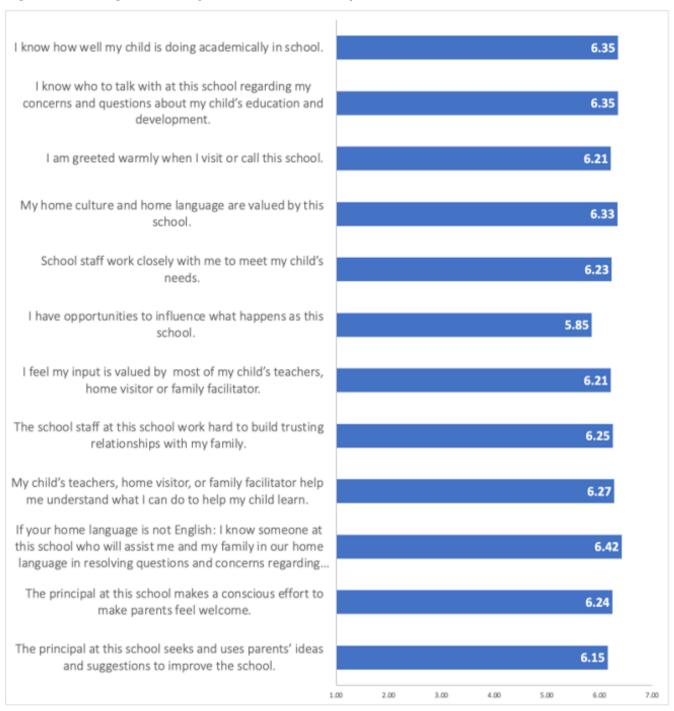
A total of 499 families with at least one child age birth to grade 3 responded to the survey across the eight schools, with 98 (19.7%) of these families reporting speaking a language other than English in the home. The majority of the families reported their race as White (n=343; 68.7%) with the next largest race category reported being "Two or more races" (n=67; 13.4%), followed by Black (n=40; 8.0%) and Asian (n=24; 4.8%). Sixteen respondents (8.2%) preferred not to report their race. Almost a quarter of the families (n=117; 23.4%) reported their ethnicity as Latinx. Almost half of the families (n=228; 45.8%) reported qualifying for the Free or Reduced Lunch (FRL) program, with 40 families (8.0%) preferring not to answer this question. Across the schools, the number of families responding to the survey ranged from 40 to 78 per school.

On a scale of 1 (low) to 7 (high), families rated schools very positively, with item averages ranging from 5.85 (SD=1.83) to 6.42 (SD=1.79) out of 7. The highest-rated item across the schools was "If your home language is not English: I know someone at (school) who will assist me and my family in our home language." The lowest-rated item, while still very positive, was "I have opportunities to influence what happens at (school)." Figure 1 displays the families' ratings for each item. It is important to note that COVID-19 may have had negative impacts on school-family connections during the 2022–2023 school year.

Reference

Ishimaru, A. M., & Lott, J. (2015). User's Guide for Road Map Family Engagement Survey: Data Inquiry for Equitable Collaboration. Retrieved from the Equitable Parent-School Collaboration Research Project website: https://education.uw.edu/epsc

Figure 1. Ratings of Family-School Partnerships



PD for All

- 1. What is the reach of the "bite-size" PD for All approach?
- 2. If and how are early childhood educators implementing knowledge learned?
- 3. What are the best practices and barriers to new knowledge implementation within instructional settings?

The theme of "PD for All" in the Spring of 2023 was building and sustaining powerful partnerships with families. A total of three sessions took place over a six-month period. Twitter and social media analytics were used to identify the reach of the "bite size" approach. A post-session survey was utilized to evaluate perception and feasibility of the approach. Finally, a mixed-methods cohort design (n=13) was employed to evaluate the influence PD for All had on an educator's self-determination to build and sustain family partnerships. The cohort was also utilized to identify perceptions, satisfaction and opportunities for improvement for the bite-size approach over a longitudinal period. Cohort members were asked to complete surveys and interviews throughout the 6-month period.

Session Overview

Each session, a video was disseminated via social media that discussed that session's content area, session titles can be seen below. The video was followed by two twitter chats each with a focused topic. After the twitter chats an infographic was shared via social media as well as through an emailed summary that highlighted key pieces from that session's content. The email summary also housed a post-program survey that requested participation from any individuals that had engaged in any of the elements of the PD for All session.

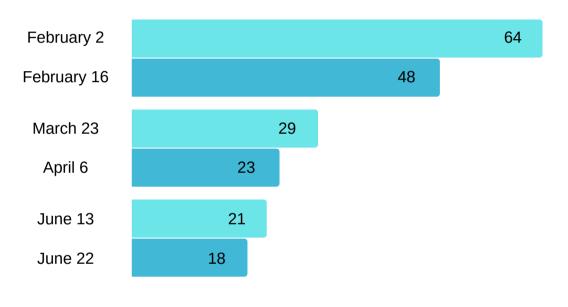
SESSION 1: BUILDING TRUSTING RELATIONSHIPS

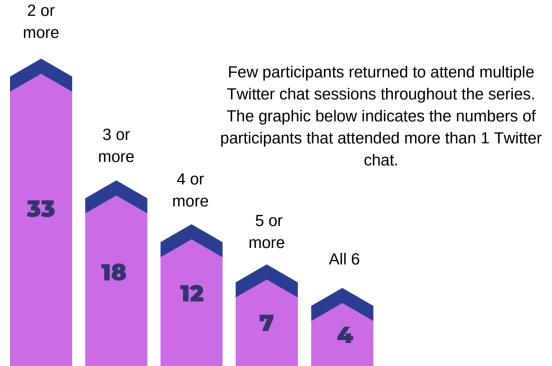
SESSION 2: SUSTAINING PARTNERSHIPS BY ADVOCATING TOGETHER FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

SESSION 3: "WIDENING THE CIRCLE OF SUPPORT:
CONNECTING WITH COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS TO
SUSTAIN POWERFUL PARTNERSHIPS"

Question #1: What was the reach of the bite-size approach?

A total of six *Twitter* chats were offered across the 6-month time period with two chats offered for each session. Participation in the *Twitter* chat sessions decreased steadily over time. 133 individuals (unduplicated count) attended at least one of the *Twitter* chat sessions held. The chart below shows the total number of participants that attended each *Twitter* chat (excluding BECI team support). During the first series, 15 participants who attended the first chat returned to attend the second, 14 participants attended both chats in the second series, and 5 participants attended both chats in the third series.





Twitter Analytics





Several Tweets from the February 2 and February 16 chat series had an average range of views of 1,000-2,200









Several Tweets from the March 23 and April 6 chat series had an average range of views of 1,000-2,300









Several Tweets from the June 13 and June 22 chat series had an average range of views of 650-1,600









YouTube Video Views

A total of four videos were created (1 for each session + an overview introductory video) across the 6-month time period. The session 2 video had the highest number of views with 483. The session 3 video had the lowest number of views with 160 views. Video views are current as of July 14th, 2023.

Overview/Introductory Video

198 views

Average view duration: 1:19 minutes Video length: 2:39 minutes

386 views

Average view duration: 3:28 minutes
Video length: 10:41 minutes

Session 1 Video
"Building Trusting
Relationships"

Session 2 Video "Advocating Together for Student Success"

483 views

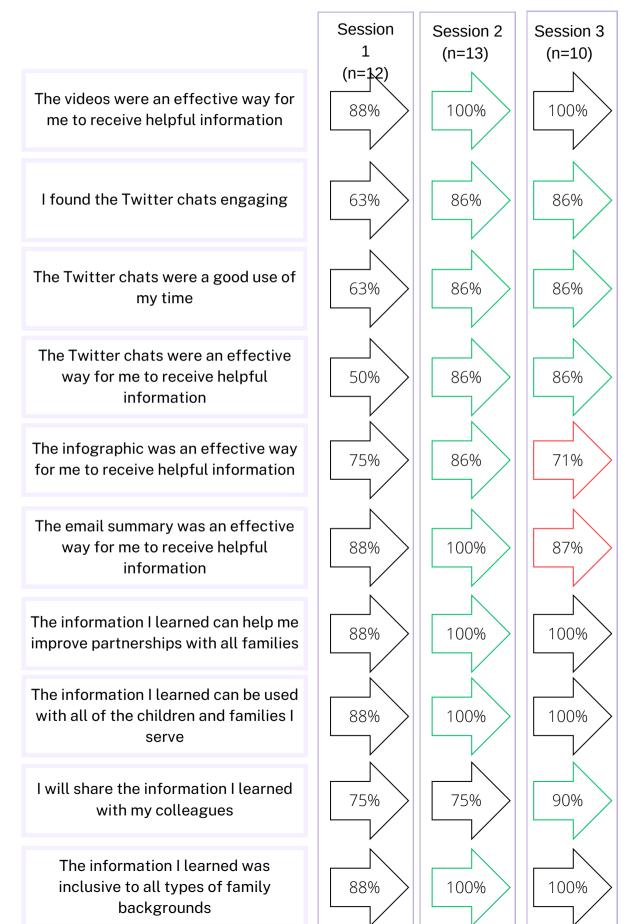
Average view duration: 2:41 minutes Video length: 10:34 minutes

160 views

Average view duration:
3:44 minutes
Video length: 10:59 minutes

Session 3 Video
"Widening the
Circle of Support"

A survey was sent in the email summary after each session and asked individuals to select a level of agreement from 1-5 (1, strongly disagree, 5, strongly agree). The summary below compares all survey respondents across the 3 sessions that selected somewhat agree or strongly agree for each item across the three survey time points. Please note individuals were only asked questions for items they identified that they had viewed or received.



Summary of Q1 & Q2 Findings

Twitter chat participation decreased steadily across the 6-month time period. Furthermore, tweet view ranges were lowest for 3rd session chats. After session 1, 63% of survey respondents somewhat agreed or strongly agreed that the *Twitter* chats were worth their time and 50% felt *Twitter* chats were an effective way to receive information. Although levels of agreement for these items increased for these items in Sessions 2 and 3, the number of individuals that reported attending the *Twitter* chats decreased.

Specific to the video component, video views were highest for session 2 with 483 views reported however the session 3 video had the longest average view duration of 3 minutes and 44 seconds. Overall, the majority of individuals that reported watching the videos agreed that the videos were an effective way to receive helpful information across the 3 sessions.

Each session a new infographic was disseminated. In all sessions the majority of respondents that viewed the infographic agreed that it was an effective way to receive new information however level of agreement was lowest after session 3.

Related to the email summary, the majority of respondents that viewed the email summary felt it was an effective way to receive information across sessions with the lowest level of agreement occurring after session 3.

Among survey respondents, there was a large level of agreement across all 3 sessions that the information shared within PD for All could be used to help improve family partnerships and the information could be shared with colleagues. Finally, the majority of survey respondents felt the PD for All content was inclusive to all types of family backgrounds.

Question #3: How did engagement in three "bite-size" learning sessions influence self-determination to build and sustain powerful family partnerships?

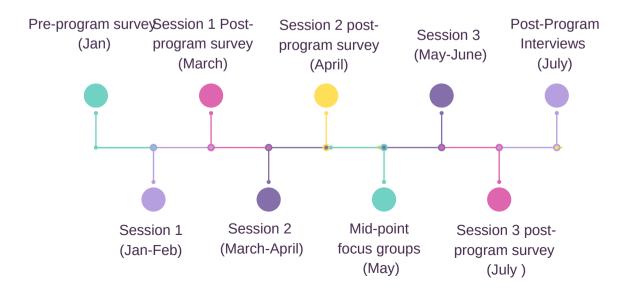
To answer this question a cohort of early childhood professionals was identified by the Buffett Early Childhood Institute's program team (n=13). Cohort members were asked to participate in all 3 sessions of PD for All. Throughout this time they were asked to complete four surveys, one mid-program focus group and one post-program interview. Across time points cohort members were asked questions related to their self-determination to build and sustain powerful family partnerships.

Self-Determination Theory

The goal of the evaluation was to identify how the bite-size learning approach influences an individual's self-determination. Self-determination theory holds two primary assumptions, (1) individuals strive for growth and (2) intrinsic motivation is key. This theory posits that to allow growth or increased motivation in a behavior, such as building and sustaining powerful family partnerships, individuals need to feel autonomous, competent and connected with those around them (relatedness) (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

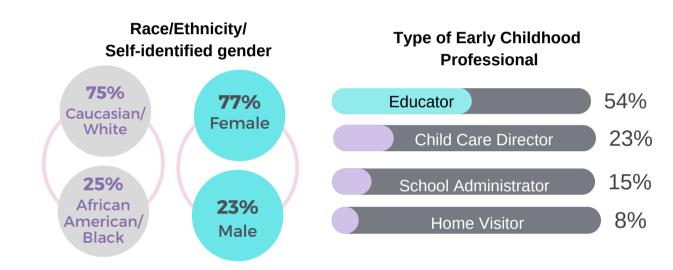
Data Collection/Analysis

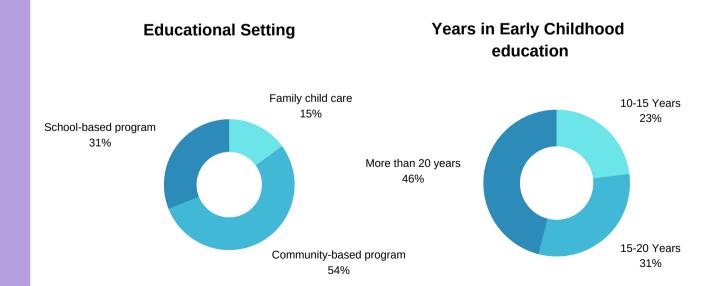
Cohort members were asked several questions related to their autonomy, competence and relatedness to engage with families at several time points. A pre-program survey was disseminated to gather baseline information. Cohort members were also asked to complete a post-session survey shared in each sessions' email summary. Survey data was analyzed for descriptive findings and compared across time points., pre-program survey data was analyzed independently. Interview data was analyzed via a constant comparative deductive analysis in which thematic findings were found at each time point and compared with one another to assess for change across time points. The timeline below demonstrates when cohort members were asked to complete various data collection pieces.



Cohort Demographics

Cohort demographic information can be seen below. The majority of participants identified as Caucasian/White and female. Most had more than 20 years of experience in early childhood education and identified as an early childhood educator (lead teacher or paraprofessional). The majority identified working in a community-based program (54%) followed by a school-based program (31%). Cohort members were asked to describe demographics related to the children they work with. Most individuals worked with children that identified as non-Hispanic (76%) and were preschool-age (36.1%) or birth to 3 years (30.5%).





PRE-PROGRAM SURVEY FINDINGS

Prior to the program beginning, cohort members were asked to complete a brief open-ended survey (January 2023) regarding how they currently obtain information related to sustaining family partnerships and how they engage with families. Most providers reported receiving information about family engagement through learning from personal experiences (90.9%), their organization providing professional development (81.8%), finding professional development outside of their organization (81.8%), or through discussions with colleagues (81.8%). When asked about current engagement strategies, responses varied widely. Respondents discussed efforts related to daily communication such as sending letters home, newsletters or conversations at drop off and pick up. Others reported offering parent participation opportunities through school events and conferences. Some individuals identified promoting community engagement opportunities for families or utilizing social media avenues such as *Facebook* groups to connect with parents. Several respondents identified trust as a key factor in building relationships and noted trusting relationships as something they valued with the families and children they work with.

PRE-PROGRAM PERCEPTIONS OF SELF-DETERMINATION TO BUILD AND SUSTAIN FAMILY PARTNERSHIPS

Prior to the onset of PD for All cohort members were asked questions to identify their baseline self-determination for building and sustaining powerful family partnerships. Questions related to the individual's feelings of autonomy, competence and relatedness were asked.

Autonomy

Cohort members identified high levels of control when asked about their ability to engage with families. Individuals felt they played a large role in families lives and saw themselves as a key source of support for the families and children they work with. As one participant noted, "I am a listener for what each family/child needs. I am a resource conduit, sometimes that is providing a needed item, a referral to an agency...or advocating alongside to build the partnership needed for the situation".

Conversely, cohort members felt barriers such as family time, language barriers and lack of buy-in from parents to sometimes hinder their ability to give support to the extent they wanted to. One cohort member noted, "I would say the biggest challenge is lack of buy-in. Some parents look at us just as a stop to drop their child off, they are in and out quickly".

PRE-PROGRAM PERCEPTIONS OF SELF-DETERMINATION TO BUILD AND SUSTAIN FAMILY PARTNERSHIPS

Competence

A high level of confidence to engage with families was reported among cohort members. Cohort members felt their communication styles with families were effective. These included ensuring face to face discussions as well as written communication were frequent. There was a consensus among cohort members that effective family engagement required going beyond a "one size fits all" approach and individualizing strategies to meet family needs. For instance, "*These strategies seem to work because they vary. We don't use one way to communicate with families*". When asked about resources to increase competence, cohort members desired translation support for non-English speaking families. When asked what knowledge or information they needed some individuals could not identify any while others reported they were always willing to learn new techniques or strategies. One individual stated, "*There's always rooms for improvement. I am looking forward to learning more from these videos*".

Relatedness

When asked to identify who they go to for support when it comes to relationships with families, most individuals identified a co-worker or administrator. As one individual noted, "I speak with my co-provider often". One individual in the cohort did not feel like they had anyone to discuss these issues with, "to be honest, I don't feel like I have many people or organizations to turn to with these issues. I will occasionally turn to management but that can be difficult as well. When asked if there was someone or something they would prefer to get support from several individuals reported increased support from administrators or experts such as school counselors or child therapists. As one individual stated, "A child therapist. I feel at a loss for answers for parents sometimes".

POST-PROGRAM PERCEPTIONS OF SELF-DETERMINATION TO BUILD AND SUSTAIN FAMILY PARTNERSHIPS

Post-program perceptions were gathered by comparing open-ended survey question responses, mid-program focus group data (n=9 cohort participants) and post-program interviews (n=10 cohort participants). Themes were collapsed across time points via a constant comparative analysis and the top themes for each theoretical construct are identified below.

Autonomy

Cohort members were split when asked to discuss autonomy-related changes since the onset of PD for All. Half of individuals did not feel any changes had been made and still felt in control of their ability to reach families with the skills and knowledge they currently had. Others reported that this experience increased their intentionality when having conversations with students and their families. One provider mentioned, "I don't think any major changes, it's probably like good reminders of the importance of partnerships with families". Cohort members still felt like they lacked control to engage parents that didn't want to be engaged or were not as easily engaged. As one person stated, "you have those families that when you do try to get more in-depth with them ,they do tend to push away more." Respondents felt they could navigate these situations by only pushing families to engage a little at a time and felt it was up to the families to reciprocate.

Competence

Respondents varied in their responses when asked to discuss changes in competence. Some cohort members did not feel like their knowledge increased throughout PD for All while others reported new information was learned. As one person noted, "If someone had any kind of two year or four year degree, most the information would be based on what those programs would have covered. I didn't feel like there was a lot of new information." Some cohort members reported new information was learned related to the use of interpreters. As one individual noted, "I think one of the things that was helpful for me was learning about interpreter services and trying to partner with families in their first language as much as you can so that the conversations and the interactions will be more meaningful." Individuals that identified as teachers or paraprofessionals were more likely to report increased competence from the PD for All experience compared to individuals that identified as administrators or childcare directors. Importantly, several respondents noted that language barriers continue to be a key barrier to engaging with families effectively.

POST-PROGRAM PERCEPTIONS OF SELF-DETERMINATION TO BUILD AND SUSTAIN FAMILY PARTNERSHIPS

Competence Continued

About half of respondents reported learning and trying out new strategies for family engagement such as utilizing open-ended questions, asking parents to share their stories and meeting parents where they are. One cohort member stated, "I think learning to give grace. And by that I mean if a parent did not come to parent-teacher conferences or a parent meeting, like having positive intent. Recognizing that a parent wants to be involved in their child's life but something may have come up". Other respondents appreciated discussions around how to engage families since the COVID-19 pandemic. As one individual recalled, "We found that a lot of families are like still hesitant [since pandemic]..so we had been trying to like find strategies to get them to come in. So like inviting them to breakfast in the morning and having like a check in system that the parents do with the kids in the mornings". Several respondents identified family communication platforms that were discussed that were new to them. Two cohort members reported interest in switching communication systems within their educational setting because of information they received from PD for All. One individual reported already actively making a chance since PD for All started while the other wanted to discuss it with colleagues. For example, "I'll say we've switched systems from Hi Mama to BrightWheel. We also switched communication systems that we use within the center and then also how we do some family engagement stuff, like sending out email, like reminders and checking up on families more."

Relatedness

Cohort members enjoyed the opportunity to learn from individuals with diverse backgrounds via the videos and twitter chats but they desired the opportunity to have more conversations with educators from diverse backgrounds. Cohort members reported appreciating the focus groups conducted as part of the PD for All evaluation because it gave them a chance to learn from one another. Cohort members still felt like their administrators or colleagues were a primary source of support when working to improve family engagement but felt like greater opportunities to connect with their fellow cohort members would have been beneficial. A few cohort members did report bringing back information they learned to their workplace. For instance, "So after every [Twitter] chat conversation, typically it fell within 2 weeks of our admin meeting. So I would bring back all the information that I learned or discussed from everyone else and all the Twitter conversations and things like that."

Question 4: How did perceptions and satisfaction for the bitesize design change over time among the cohort?

COHORT ENGAGEMENT ACROSS SESSIONS

Descriptive findings depicting the extent to which each cohort member engaged in each session can be seen below. Overall, cohort participation in the post-program survey was not optimal with 8 out of 13 individuals completing surveys 1 and 2 and 6 individuals completing survey 3.



Viewed the session video

Attended the February 2nd Twitter chat on "Building Trusting Partnerships" (Session 1)



Attended the February 16th Twitter chat on "Bumps in the Road that disrupt building trusting partnerships" (Session 1)



Attended the March 23rd Twitter chat on "Sustaining Trusting Partnerships" (Session 2)



Attended the April 6th Twitter chat on "Advocating Together for Student Success" (Session 2)

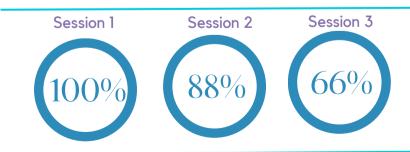


Attended the June 13th Twitter chat on "Widening the Circle of Support" (Session 3)



Attended the June 22nd Twitter chat on "Championing for Change" (Session 3)





Reviewed the Infographic

Read the email summary









The survey asked individuals to select a level of agreement from 1-5 (1, strongly disagree, 5, strongly agree). Findings below represent individuals that selected agree or strongly agree for each item.

AG	GREE	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3
	The video was an effective way for me to receive helpful information	88%	100%	100%
	I found the Twitter chats engaging	63%	86%	83%
600	The Twitter chats were a good use of my time	63%	86%	83%
	The Twitter chats were an effective way for me to receive helpful information	50%	86%	83%
	The infographic was an effective way for me to receive helpful information	75%	86%	66%
	The email summary was an effective way for me to receive helpful information	88%	100%	83%
	The information I learned can help me improve partnerships with all families	88%	100%	100%
	The information I learned can be used with all of the children and families I serve	88%	100%	83%
	I will share the information I learned with my colleagues	75%	75%	100%
	The information I learned was inclusive to all types of family backgrounds	88%	100%	100%

Question 5: How can the bite-size learning approach be improved?

Cohort members were asked during the mid-point focus groups and post-program interviews to reflect on their experience with PD for All. Individuals were asked to identify benefits to participation, any challenges they experienced, changes they would recommend and remaining gaps in knowledge and/or resources. Similar questions were asked in each post-program survey as well. Thematic findings were collapsed across the focus groups, interviews and survey findings and are shared below.

PROGRAMMATIC SUCCESSES

APPRECIATION FOR VIDEO-BASED LEARNING

The majority of cohort members reported enjoying the videos. Individuals appreciated hearing from different provider types and appreciated the video length as well. One person noted, "I really like watching the videos and listening to all the speakers and the people that are talking, to get a personal reflection on things". A few individuals noted they would have preferred longer videos while others noted more videos such as 2 or 3 videos per session.

A VARIETY OF PERSPECTIVES

Cohort members appreciated the diversity of perspectives and learning from individuals with different backgrounds. As one individual noted, "Just a bunch of different information from all these different people was just truly an awesome experience". Another individual mentioned, "being able to talk to people in different situations and learn the challenges and things that they're doing, gaining that perspective was really, really nice. I would say that was most beneficial for me.

APPRECIATION FOR THE BITE-SIZE LEARNING MODEL

Individuals appreciated the bite-size learning approach with respect to the time required for involvement and the direct nature of the information shared. One person noted, "I think it [bite-sized learning approach] is very informative, I don't think there is any wasted time. Like this is your 8 minutes, this is all of the information you need. There's no fluff to it, no beating around the bush, even with the questions on Twitter-it's very direct, to the point questions." Another individual shared similar sentiments and stated, "It was stuff that was very quick, very accessible and very easy to navigate. So I appreciate that. I appreciated the Twitter chats that there were an hour...then the infographics and going back to the videos, I think that the fact that they were just short and sweet was helpful."

60

PROGRAMMATIC CHALLENGES

TECHNOLOGICAL BARRIERS HINDERED EXPERIENCE

About half of respondents felt their experience was negatively impacted by the use of Twitter chats due to a lack of familiarity with the Twitter platform. Individuals reported that they struggled to keep up with conversations during the chats and disliked the limited character limit allowed in chats. As one individual noted, "I have never used Twitter before...and so it was a bit difficult for me to navigate the conversation. Just how do I follow individual comments on it and see new comments..I'm very familiar with Facebook and Zoom but not twitter. " Other cohort members echoed a desire for more Zoom opportunities, "Maybe just doing some more Zooms with others instead of just doing Twitter chats so I can actually talk to people. I think that was sometimes missing."

LACK OF DEPTH IN INFORMATION SHARED

Some respondents felt there was a lack of depth around the information shared across sessions. Several respondents identified themselves as well-trained educators due to their years of experience in early childhood education and reported feeling like the information shared was for a more novice individual. For example,

"I think that because it was so superficial, it was hard for me to feel like anyone walked away with gaining information. And to me, when we're doing professional development, you should walk away with something you gained. It may not all be new information, and I've been in this field a really long time. But I find that when I go to a conference, I may not walk out with the amount of information I walked out when I was a young professional. But I always gained something. And I cannot say that from this experience."

LACK OF TIME TO FULLY ENGAGE IN PD FOR ALL

While cohort members appreciated the concise nature of the education shared, several individuals still struggled to fit the PD for All opportunities into their personal lives. Some disliked the timing of the Twitter chats as they fell over dinner time and others reported struggling to review materials to the extent they would have liked to. Many individuals appreciated being able to review materials on their own time and reported going back to the videos and twitter chats however most still felt like a lack of time hindered their experience. As one person noted, "Working a full-time job, some things are just harder than others to find time for."

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

MORE FOCUS ON HOW TO ADDRESS INEQUITY

Cohort members desired a greater focus on inequity within future programming. Some individuals discussed a focus on barriers that rural early childhood programs face while others wanted to identify ways to support families of lower socioeconomic status. Other cohort members wanted ways to teach their students about various cultures. For instance, "*Until we start addressing some inequities, we can train people all day long but have to look at what those inequities are so we begin to mobilize and train people to be able to advocate.*"

ENHANCE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEER TO PEER ENGAGEMENT

Individuals enjoyed any opportunity to learn from their peers. Some individuals wished that their colleagues had been with them so they could have further discussion on learning points or work together to apply strategies discussed in the session videos or *Twitter* chats. Others reported a desire to increase networking opportunities. One person noted, "I think just hearing the different ideas from different people, we [early childhood educators] suck at networking and for some reason, in this industry, we get stuck in our own world. We focus on our own ideas, our own curriculum, our own philosophies, but at the end of the day we all have this one shared goal and that is to work these kids and these families." Another cohort member mentioned, "The greatest takeaway for me is that you don't have to do it by yourself. Like I don't have to recreate the wheel. There is another professional that knows how to do what I'm trying to do. So being able to reach out to people and ask for help."

PROVIDE INFORMATION MORE FREQUENTLY

Cohort members felt it was difficult to remain engaged throughout the six-month period due to the gaps between sessions. Individuals desired more frequent bursts of information. One individual noted, "I wish there wasn't such a lull...I don't necessarily enjoy the lulls, if it would have been just more consistent information...over time this kind of went to the back burner, it ramped up and slowed back down." Some individuals reported wanting more information via video or infographics while others just wanted information shared more consistently throughout the 6 month period.

Summary of Q3-Q5 Findings

Prior to the onset of PD for All programming, the identified cohort of early childhood professionals reported high levels of confidence and control regarding their ability to engage with families. In addition, most cohort members felt they had a good support system among their colleagues and administrators. Based on the qualitative data gathered throughout the 6-month period, cohort members perceptions of competence appear to have increased. Cohort members report obtaining new information related to family engagement and have either integrated new strategies into their routine or have plans to do so in the future. Feelings of autonomy and relatedness do not appear to have shifted however cohort members greatly desire the opportunity to learn from other educators, especially when their backgrounds vary from their own. Cohort members still report language barriers to be the greatest challenge when working to connect with families and still desire more resources in this area.

When considering the PD for All format, cohort members liked the video-based learning the most and had the greatest challenges with the *Twitter* chats due to technical barriers. Several individuals desired the inclusion of a platform such as Zoom due to their familiarity with it but also to allow for more engagement with other cohort members. Furthermore, there was a desire to receive information more consistently and a push for information to focus on addressing inequities within early childhood education. Finally, some cohort members felt the level of information provided was superficial and desired a deeper level of learning to occur with future programming.

The reach of PD for All was limited and participation was low beyond cohort member engagement throughout the 6 month period. Cohort members also struggled to engage in program evaluation measures suggesting current expected involvement (i.e., surveys, focus groups and interviews) may be too burdensome.

In conclusion, the bite-size learning approach was well received by cohort members with video-based education being most preferred. Future programmatic efforts could consider the addition of peer engagement opportunities to allow educators to learn from one another. In addition, various online platforms could be considered to reduce the technological barriers identified while using *Twitter*.

Instructional Toolkit

- 1.What is the work group's self-efficacy for tool implementation through the lens of self-efficacy theory? (Cohort 1)
- 2. How does the workgroup experience influence perceptions of the six essential child experiences? (Cohorts 1 & 2)
- 3. What are the best practices and barriers to workgroup program implementation? (Cohorts 1 & 2)

Essential Child Experiences Toolkit Workgroup Description

Early childhood educators and leaders joined the staff at the Buffett Early Childhood Institute at the University of Nebraska to guide the development of an Essential Child Experiences Instructional Toolkit. The Toolkit focused on enhancing quality, expanding equity, and strengthening continuity in classrooms serving children from birth through Grade 3. Workgroup members co-constructed and developed resources that promote deeper understanding, enhanced usability, and increased clarity for successful implementation of the following essential child experiences:

- 1. Cultural, Linguistic & Personal Relevance
- 2.Language-Rich Communication
- 3. Cognitive Challenge
- 4. Collaboration among Peers
- 5. Child Decision Making and Planning
- 6. Child Initiated Exploration and Innovation



COHORT 1 EVALUATION JANUARY-DECEMBER 2022

Essential Child Experiences Toolkit Workgroup 1 Evaluation

From January to December of 2022, 15 educators and 15 school/child care leaders participated in the Instructional Toolkit workgroup. Participation in the Instructional Toolkit workgroup consisted of two phases. In the first phase, toolkit workgroup members participated in four virtual workshops that met in January and February 2022. The second phase included monthly workgroup meetings, beginning in March and ending in December 2022. In order to assess their comfort level implementing the six Essential Child Experiences in their classrooms and their understanding of each Essential Child Experience, toolkit workgroup members were asked to complete a survey at three timepoints across the yearlong process: (1) before attending the four workshops (2) after attending the four workshops, and (3) after completing the completion of the workgroup experience. Throughout this report timepoints will be referred to as (1) pre-workshop, (2) midpoint, and (3) post-workgroup.

Comfort with Implementation

Toolkit workgroup members were asked to rate their comfort level in implementing each of the six Essential Child Experiences in the classroom on a scale of 1 (very uncomfortable) to 5 (very comfortable). The average comfort level across the six Essential Child Experiences was 3.97 (n = 32) at the pre-workshop timepoint, 3.93 (n = 27) at the midpoint, and 4.29 (n = 18) at the post-workgroup timepoint. For Cognitive Challenge and Child Initiated Exploration and Innovation, workgroup members' ratings reflected lowest comfort levels prior to completing workshops with scores increasing across the three time points. When rating their comfort implementing Cultural, Linguistic, and Personal Relevance, Language-Rich Communication, and Child Decision Making and Planning, workgroup members scores decreased from pre-workshop to the midpoint, and scores reflected the highest comfort levels after the workgroup was completed. For Collaboration with Peers, workgroup members had the highest comfort ratings prior to completing workshops and ratings dropped across the next two time points. Comfort ratings for each Essential Child Experience across the three timepoints can be seen in Table 1.

Comfort with Implementation

TABLE 1. COMFORT RATINGS FOR IMPLEMENTING EACH ESSENTIAL CHILD EXPERIENCE

	Cultural,	Cognitive	Language-Rich	Collaboration	Child	Child Initiated	Overall
	Linguistic,	Challenge	Communication	with Peers	Decision	Exploration	
	and Personal				Making and	and Innovation	
	Relevance				Planning		
Pre-	3.97	3.75	4.16	4.39	3.78	3.88	3.97
workshop							
Midpoint	3.96	3.81 4.07		4.00	3.71	4.05	3.93
Post- workgroup	4.22	4.11	4.76	4.24	4.24	4.25	4.29

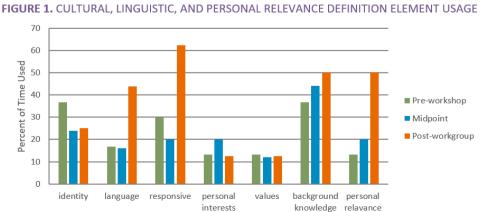
The slight changes in comfort scores from pre-workshop to the midpoint following the four workshops could be driven by toolkit workgroup members' shifts in understanding of the six Essential Child Experiences after participating in the workshops; workshops could have brought toolkit members a greater awareness of the definitions, which could cause them to be less comfortable with implementation. Following the workgroup completion, overall scores increased. which could be a result of increased opportunities to implement learning.

Understanding

Toolkit workgroup members were asked to describe their understanding of each of the six Essential Child Experiences in their own words at each of the three time points (pre-workshop, midpoint, and post-workgroup). To analyze responses, predetermined elements of each Essential Child Experience definition (as presented in the workshops) were identified and a qualitative approach was utilized to evaluate survey responses for the use of the predetermined definition elements.

Cultural, Linguistic and Personal Relevance

In their definitions of Cultural, Linguistic, and Personal Relevance, workgroup members focused on "identity" prior to attending workshops while use of this term decreased following workshops and the workgroup. "Background knowledge" was also used often initially and use steadily increased across the following timepoints. "Personal relevance" which was used less often preworkshop, also increased in usage across sessions. "Responsive" was used somewhat frequently pre-workshop, less often at the midpoint and appeared most frequently in postworkgroup definitions. Though participants did not use the term "language" in pre-workshop or midpoint definitions, it appeared frequently in post-workgroup definitions. Figure 1 depicts the percent of time the predetermined elements of the definition of Cultural, Linguistic, and Personal Relevance were used by participants across each of the three time points.



Cognitive Challenge

When asked to define Cognitive Challenge, many toolkit members often included "development of knowledge" and "thinking" in their definitions prior to attending workshops. Use of these terms became even more frequent after attending workshops, but following the completion of the workgroup, they were used even less frequently than at the first timepoint, indicating some potential learning loss. Several members used the terms "apply" and "rigorous" in their pre-workshop definitions. At the midpoint, "apply" was not used at all and "rigorous" was used slightly more often. Both terms appeared even more in post-workgroup definitions than in any other time point, with "rigorous" being used more often than any other term post-workgroup. This may indicate that experience with implementing the term was most impactful in relation to these terms. Figure 2 displays the usage of Cognitive Challenge definitional elements across time.

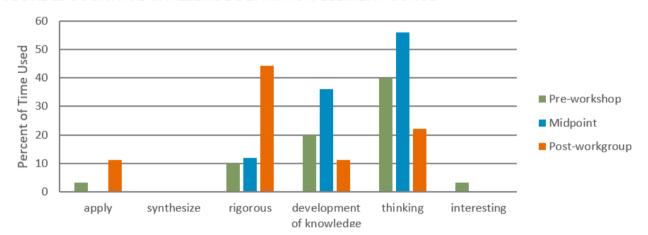
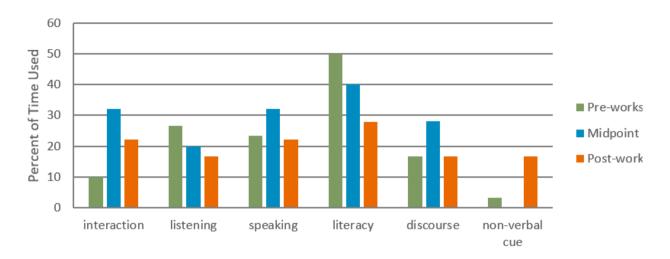


FIGURE 2. COGNITIVE CHALLENGE DEFINITION ELEMENT USAGE

Language Rich Communication

Perhaps the most noticeable shift was how workgroup members defined Language Rich Communication across time points. After completing workshops, members included the terms "interaction" and "speaking" more frequently, but use of these terms decreased following completion of the workgroup. Similarly, "discourse" was used somewhat frequently prior to workshops, most frequently at the midpoint, and returned to baseline usage at the post-workgroup timepoint. In contrast, "listening" was used most often prior to attending workshops decreased across the next two timepoints. This may demonstrate a paradigm shift where workgroup members came to see Language Rich Communication as a two-way interaction rather than a teacher using words and children listening. Slight learning loss may have occurred following separation from the more intensive learning phase of the workshops. Use of the term "literacy" declined steadily across all three timepoints. Conversely, use of "non-verbal cues" increased in frequency from the preworkshop timepoint to the post-workgroup timepoint. Usage of the definitional elements of Language Rich Communication across time can be found in Figure 3.

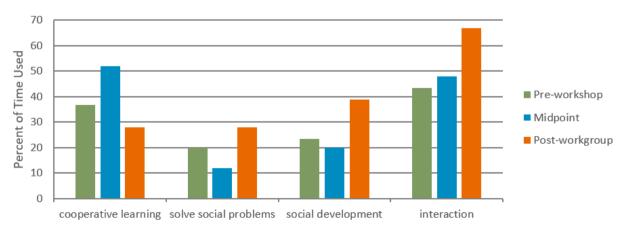
FIGURE 3. LANGUAGE RICH COMMUNICATION DEFINITION ELEMENT USAGE



Collaboration with Peers

In definitions of Collaboration with Peers, the most frequently used terms pre-workshop were "cooperative learning" and "interaction." Workgroup members used "cooperative learning" even more often at the midpoint, while post-workgroup, it was used less often than at the first timepoint. Use of the term "interaction" increased across all three time points. Other commonly used terms included "solve social problems" and "social development", both of which were used less often following the workshops, and most often of all following completion of the workgroup. This may be evidence that these terms were most relevant in the real-world implementation of Collaboration with Peers during the window of time where workgroup members were creating tools. See Figure 4 for the percent of time each definitional component of Collaboration with Peers was used across time.

FIGURE 4. COLLABORATION WITH PEERS DEFINITION ELEMENT USAGE



Child Decision Making and Planning

By far, the terms used most frequently to define Child Decision Making and Planning across all time points were "autonomy" and "child-directed." Both terms were used even more often at the midpoint. Following the workgroup, use of both terms decreased, with "child-directed" dropping below the pre-workshop usage. This may imply that in practice, allowing children to have autonomy was more relevant to Child Decision Making and Planning than having activities be child-directed. Usage of each element of the definition for Child Decision Making and Planning across time is displayed in Figure 5.

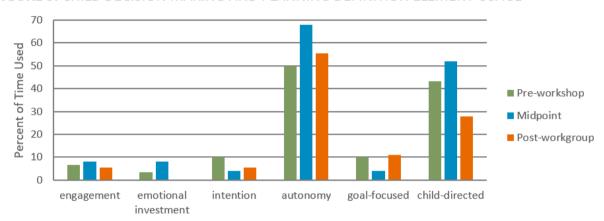


FIGURE 5. CHILD DECISION MAKING AND PLANNING DEFINITION ELEMENT USAGE

Child Initiated Exploration and Innovation

Definitions of Child Initiated Exploration and Innovation included "open-ended" and "curiosity" most frequently across all three time points. At the midpoint, use of "curiosity" slightly increased while use of "open-ended" slightly decreased. Following the completion of the workgroup, these terms were used less often than at any other time point, which may follow suit with the trend of slight learning loss once workgroup members were removed from the more intensive learning atmosphere of the workshops. "Innovation" and "play" were also used somewhat frequently in definitions and slight changes in usage indicate increases in the use of "innovation" following completion of the workgroup. Figure 6 represents the percent of time each definitional element for Child Initiated Exploration and Innovation appeared across the three timepoints.

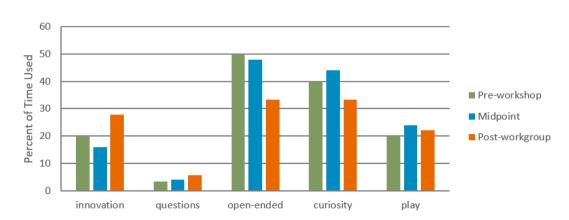


FIGURE 6. CHILD INITIATED EXPLORATION AND INNOVATION DEFINITION ELEMENT USAGE

Conclusion

Results of these surveys indicate that workshops had the most meaningful impact on how workgroup members defined the six Essential Child Experiences. While workgroup members indicated minimal change in their comfort levels implementing the essential experiences in their classroom, learning was evident in the expanded definitions of these terms following the workshops. Following the completion of the workgroup, definitions of the six Essential Child Experiences continued to shift, with some potential loss in learning. However, participants felt more comfortable with the implementation of the six Essential Child Experiences, demonstrating the implications of the practical experience gained during the workgroup sessions.

Post Program Focus Group Findings-Cohort 1

In January 2023, four focus groups took place with 11 participants of the Superintendents' Early Childhood Plan Instructional Toolkit Cohort #1. Focus groups took place over zoom and lasted an average of 49 minutes. Participants were asked a series of 10 semi-structured questions regarding their experiences participating in the toolkit program.



Questions were developed based on the constructs of self-efficacy theory to investigate three primary evaluation aims:

- 1. To investigate how the workgroup experience influenced perceptions of the six essential experiences.
- 2. To determine what influenced work group members' self-efficacy for implementing new knowledge.
- 3. To identify feasibility of tool implementation.
- 4. To identify best practices and barriers to workgroup program implementation and provide future programmatic recommendations.

Participants had an average of 16 years of teaching experience and had diverse teaching experiences. These included lead teaching, assistant teaching, owning a childcare center or family childcare home, serving as a director of an Early Childhood Center, or as an instructional coach.

Semi-structured focus group data was transcribed verbatim and analyzed via a deductive content analysis approach. Four evaluators were involved in the data analysis process that consisted of 3 steps. Step 1 involved deductively coding the data within the main constructs of self-efficacy theory. Step 2 involved meeting as a team to discuss codes and reach consensus. Step 3 involved a primary evaluator reviewing all combined codes to ensure appropriate categorization, interpretation, and representativeness. This report depicts primary thematic findings.

HOW DID THE WORKGROUP INFLUENCE PERCEPTIONS OF THE SIX ESSENTIAL EXPERIENCES?

Thematic findings related to the six essential experiences included: desire to support children through the lens of the child, greater intention within classroom practice, serving as a model for peers, and validation for current practices. Overall, participants reported an appreciation for the six essential experiences and found this topic area to be extremely valuable to their professional growth and learning. Participants noted that they enjoyed the presentations related to the essential experiences as well as the opportunities for self and group reflections. Example quotes within each thematic area can be seen below.

Desire to support children through the lens of the child

I think taking that lens of the child and having that perspective throughout... a child of color and in a kindergarten classroom intentionally because they are marginalized, those are the kids that we're leaving behind, that are left out of the curriculum and just trying to make that shift and also

and just trying to make that shift and also encourage that shift in teachers' brains. I think that was a big takeaway for me.

Greater intention within classroom practice

I think making me more mindful about providing those opportunities in purposeful ways, you know, getting into those centers and playing with kids and using those everyday experiences to provide these.

Serving as a model for peers

66

Just being mindful and being in the classroom and being that model or coach to show them [peer teachers] how they can do that and be a model when they come in [the classroom].

"

Validation for current practices

We often find ourselves kind of complaining about this and that. And I said, wait a minute, why are we all here together? What is the purpose of all of us being here? What's the purpose of our staff being here? And then it's for the individual child. Yes, we are in group childcare and our classrooms are full of kids and all of that. But we have little individuals in all of our rooms. And so, for me personally, it brought me back to the very purpose.. right back to my roots of working with children.

WHAT INFLUENCED WORK GROUP MEMBERS' SELF-EFFICACY FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW KNOWLEDGE?

Performance Outcomes

- Appreciation for final product creation
- Drive to improve practices based on new knowledge
- Strong belief in ability to implement created tool if tool was finished

Emotional States

- Appreciation for time spent together
- Positive perception of group dynamic
- Perceived institute staff as supportive and passionate

Verbal Persuasion

- Substantial peer support
- Encouragement from others was greatly valued
- Hearing diverse perspectives increased drive to implement new learning

Vicarious Experiences

- Value for diverse voices with respect to child age and program location
- Desire to emulate shared practices

WHAT IS THE FEASIBILITY OF TOOLKIT IMPLEMENTATION?

Specific to the tools developed within each affinity group, the majority of participants felt confident they could implement these tools in their own early childhood practice. When asked to rate this confidence on a scale of 1 to 5 (1, low-5, high), the average score was **3.9.** Thematic findings related to confidence level included: identifying the tool as valuable and self-appreciation for tool development. Specifically, participants felt that the tool was a worthwhile resource because of the choices they made when creating the tool. For example, one participant stated:



We have a lot of resources. I think it's just knowing what to use and when and just becoming more efficient with those resources, but I feel like this tool could help that, you know, to hone in on it. How to get the most bang for your buck.

Participants were also asked to share any anticipated barriers they thought might occur when asking an individual not currently engaged in the workgroup to implement the tools. The main thematic finding was related to limited resources. Participants were concerned that not all early childhood professionals would have access to resources such as funding and materials to utilize the tools effectively. In addition, several participants mentioned a concern related to language within the tools. Participants worried that several of the tools used "*teacher talk*," and that some individuals in early childhood wouldn't have an understanding of this terminology.



Because that was the one thing, like if you're going to make this toolkit and you're going to make it accessible for everybody...if you don't have the materials, then you can't use those things, and that was like a huge conversation we had because I had a girl in my group that was from a daycare and she's like, 'Well, you know my funding - I have to go to the goodwill to get things and stuff." And so we had a lot of conversations about how can we make something that doesn't require you to go and have blocks or have these books or all these kinds of things.

WHAT WERE THE PROGRAMMATIC SUCCESSES?

NEW KNOWLEDGE WAS OBTAINED

Participants enjoyed the information given in the presentations at the beginning of the program, especially information related to the six early childhood experiences. Most individuals felt they gained a deeper understanding of their specific affinity group and felt this knowledge would shift their day-to-day actions in their practice.

"I feel like I made a goal to do more from the affinity group that I was in, thinking about [affinity group], and I think I still am taking some of that into my work, but I think that was my capacity of just being able to focus on that one. And I didn't dive into the others as much, but it's also because there's just so much going on when it comes to planning and so many other things that we have to take into consideration."

INSTITUTE STAFF WERE APPROACHABLE AND SUPPORTIVE

The majority of participants felt that the Institute staff were always approachable and supportive. Institute staff were reported to always be available for questions and troubleshooting. Participants noted that institute staff always followed up when they had questions and were available to be thought partners. As two participants noted:

"They were definitely approachable. I really liked the presentations."

"They wanted to see this come together and stuff. She [institute staff] always had a lot to say and was very knowledgeable about everything."

EFFECTIVE COLLABORATION WITH PEERS AND INSTITUTE STAFF

The majority of participants stated they enjoyed the opportunity to dialogue and engage with their peers. Participants often stated that the diversity of program participants with respect to background and experience was a huge benefit to the program. Interviewees appreciated the opportunity to receive insights and viewpoints from the institute staff, especially related to the final products. A few participants shared:

"I really liked how us, as peers, all the different educators in the group, would go in and evaluate our final projects. But I also liked how then they as an institute went and looked at it and gave ideas from their viewpoint too."

"You know, we all worked well together...I loved meeting different educators from around the metro - that was really neat, and just learning about their roles, where they work and teach. So that was fun."

WHAT WERE THE PROGRAMMATIC CHALLENGES?

INTEGRATION OF KNOWLEDGE INTO PRACTICE MAY BE LIMITED TO AFFINITY GROUP

Some participants felt that they would have preferred to work with more than one affinity group. Individuals noted that they had been asked to select an affinity group early in the process, and by the end of the process, they may have chosen a different group. Many noted they had a desire to learn more about other affinity groups but identified time as a barrier to doing so. For example, one interviewee stated:

"I feel like I know the most about my own affinity group though, and like once I dove into that, I kind of forgot about some of the other ones,"

However, several individuals did feel they had a deep understanding of their chosen affinity group, and this translated into classroom practice changes. For instance:

"When I go to do my everyday job, I probably focus on the one that I dived deepest into, and so that's the one I implement the most, and you know, really think about when I'm teaching."

UNCLEAR PROGRAM EXPECTATIONS

The majority of participants reported being unsure of program expectations at program onset. This was especially true for the affinity group process. Several participants noted they were unsure of what this process would entail and stated they would have selected a different affinity group if they had known the process. One participant shared:

"I would say that having more direction at the beginning, because I felt like in the beginning, and I know maybe because it was a new experience that they were trying, but I just felt like it was all over the place."

GROUP DYNAMICS

Participants reported frustration with a lack of consistency among affinity groups and among Institute staff. Individuals noted Institute staff turnover and confusion over who was involved from the Institute. However, this improved as the program continued. Some individuals reported affinity group members changing throughout the program, while others felt that the individuals they were paired with did not put in enough effort. Conversely, some felt they worked well in their affinity groups and saw themselves as a "team."

"I was an original member of the group, and I can't remember when we started those. That was around July, I believe. But my group changed members many times. I'd have one month, there'd be two of us, and then the next month, that person wouldn't be there. And then I was told, 'Oh ya, you're getting this person,' and I don't, you know, I started thinking it was me."

WHAT ARE THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT?

MORE TIME FOR GROUP WORK

The majority of participants felt they didn't have enough time to accomplish the program objectives they were tasked with. A few individuals felt there was too much time spent outside of the expected hours of involvement. Further, a few individuals reported unclear expectations related to time commitment to the program and believed some individuals left the program because of the time commitment required.

"I feel like we only probably tapped the tip of the iceberg because of the time frame that we had. And then, you know, we have these good intentions of, 'Hey, let's do a meet up on some other time,' and we just never could get it all together."

LOGISTICAL IMPROVEMENTS

Several participants gave suggestions for logistical improvements. These included: (1) ensuring participants receive mailed materials prior to meetings, (2) adding checkpoints with institute staff during affinity group work to ensure they are on the right track, (3) providing indicators for each meeting with what will be discussed and accomplished (4) allow cross-collaboration between affinity groups (5) support for technological barriers. Specific to the technological barriers, participants reported barriers related to the various platforms utilized and desired fewer platforms be included. Several participants reported issues with utilizing Google Docs.



But then one thing, I was one [affinity group], and there was two groups, and we always wondered what the other group was doing, but we never got to collaborate with that other group or even come back and see.



I'm not a Google Docs person. I don't really know how to do it. So one girl kind of stepped up, and she'd always like, kind of type for us, and we would all try to, you know, like work together to make sure she would pull it up on our screen so we could see it, which that, you know, that makes it so much easier for everybody to be able to contribute at the same time.

COHORT 2 OVERVIEW JANUARY-JUNE 2023

Data Collection Methodologies

- Focus groups were conducted prior to the program start and at the immediate end of the program. In the pre-program focus group, individuals were given a brief description of each essential child experience and asked to describe what each definition meant to them. Individuals were also asked to describe how they integrate that experience into their teaching as well as share challenges to integration. Finally, individuals were asked to share their perceptions related to the term "lens of the child" and how they perceive their personal biases influencing their practice. In the post-program focus group individuals were asked to describe how the integration of each essential child experience, lens of the child and their biases had changed since beginning the instructional toolkit program as well as share thoughts related to program tool development and program quality improvement.
- A post-program survey was disseminated in June 2023. This consisted of a confidence scale (1-low; 7, high) that asked individuals to rate level of confidence in their ability to integrate essential child experiences into their instructional environment. In addition, an experiencing scale was included to evaluate how the workgroup experience influenced experiential learning based on the Kolb cycle of learning. The experiencing scale is a 20-item instrument that asks individual to rate their experience across several constructs (Stock & Kolb, 2021). Example questions from both instruments can be seen below.

On a scale of 1.7 (1, low confidence, 7, high confidence) how confident are you in your ability to integrate the following essential child experiences into your instructional environment?

1

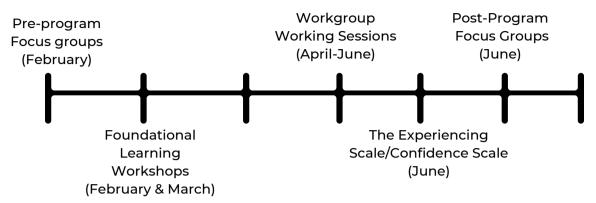
Cultural, Linguistic and Personal Relevance Each child experiences learning built upon the foundation of what they already know and through familiar approaches to learning. They have ample opportunities to connect new ideas to their background knowledge, cultural values and interests. 2 3 4 5 6 7

Figure 1. Confidence Scale Example Question

1	I saw things in new ways	О	0	0	O	0	O	0	My views did not change.
2	It was fresh & new.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	It was pretty much as I expected.
3	I learned something new.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	I didn't learn anything new.
4	I was deeply involved.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	I was uninvolved.
5	I was alert and aware.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	I was easily distracted.
6	I actively participated.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	I did not participate.

COHORT 2 OVERVIEW

Program & Evaluation Timeline



Focus Group Data Analysis

Focus group data were transcribed verbatim by evaluators within the Munroe Meyer Institute. Data was then entered into NVivo qualitative analysis software and analyzed by three evaluators. Evaluators reviewed initial transcripts through a process of immersion/crystallization. A deductive content analysis approach was employed and guided by the definitions of the six essential child experiences. Evaluators met to discuss initial codes and collapse overarching categories. A trained qualitative expert then reviewed all codes and resolved any coding discrepancies. This process was conducted separately for the pre-program findings (February) and the post-program findings (June). Upon completion, the primary qualitative researcher completed a constant comparative analysis utilizing axial coding to draw connections between pre and post program findings specific to the integration of the six essential child experiences. Findings are reported below.

Survey Data Analysis

Confidence scale scores in the post-program survey were analyzed for descriptive means. Confidence scores were then compared with pre-program focus group findings as individuals were asked to provide the same scale rating. The Experiencing Scale was scored based on the scoring information associated with this instrument. Specific scale items were identified to demonstrate level of engagement in learning from novelty to presence to embodiment. Responses leaning to the left side of the scale line were identified as being in line with the experiencing self. Dots leaning towards the right side indicated the participant may be less engaged in the learning process. For our purposes reverse scoring occurred and scale dots were provided a numerical score of 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2,1. A mean scale score was calculated for each subconstruct of novelty, presence and embodiment with a higher score indicating greater engagement in the learning process.

Cultural, Linguistic and Personal Relevance-Before Workgroup

How integration is happening

Respondents commonly discussed identifying ways to link children's home experiences into their educational environment. In addition, respondents reported meeting children where they are at and taking a child's culture into consideration when developing curriculum.

"Making sure that my lesson and what I am doing is culturally respective, linguistically respected and that the material is relevant."

What else they would like to do

Respondents desired to educate administrators further in this area. In addition, discussions of reducing personal biases were shared.

Respondents reported a wish for more culturally relevant classroom resources and access to community resources to continue their personal cultural education.

"A lot of the materials we have are not up-todate...we have a big long list of books that we are passionate about, about a lot of different issues that we want to add to our classroom."

Cultural, Linguistic and Personal Relevance-After Workgroup

How integration has changed since the toolkit workgroup experience...

Some respondents did not identify changes in this area as they felt like this was an area they already excelled in. Others reported increased confidence to apply new strategies to the knowledge they had before the workgroup. Furthermore, some reported an increased awareness of how to support a child's cultural or personal relevance.

"If my students are...any other culture, if they don't know something, this has allowed me to be a little bit more aware of maybe..is this a cultural aspect or is this something on a personal or familial level? It allows me to reflect a little bit more before I jump in and say, well they just don't know this"

Language Rich Communication- Before Workgroup

How integration is happening

Strategies related to integrating language rich communication included: asking open-ended questions, connecting existing words to knowledge, holding meaningful conversations with children and allowing children to expand language in a safe environment.

"Just giving them opportunities to talk to the teacher, talk with their peers and having those conversations flow, expanding on them [conversations] through learning and giving a chance to talk and ask questions."

What else they would like to do

When asked what additional strategies they might like to utilize, ideas included: adding labels to the classroom, narrating classroom materials into multiple languages and learning new techniques to engage children at the infant/toddler level.

"I would still love to learn little new techniques to help children learn language, especially infants and toddlers."

Language Rich Communication-After Workgroup

How integration has changed since the toolkit workgroup experience...

Some respondents reported their integration had not shifted since the workgroup experience. Others reported an increased awareness related to the value and importance for child conversation and peer to peer verbal interactions.

"I think that just understanding that to help like younger kids' kind of develop their voice..we probably need to talk more and also listen more. And give them time to kind of like express their feelings, even if it starts off as just babbles and just allowing them to kind of have that back and forth or allowing them to kind of explain what they are seeing."

Cognitive Challenge-Before Workgroup

How integration is happening

When considering cognitive challenge, respondents reported that they tried to help children solve problems with "just enough" support. In addition, finding opportunities for children to feel a sense of autonomy and accomplishment were highlighted. Finally, identifying innovative strategies to push children to think differently were mentioned.

"When I think of cognitive challenge, I think of working through things on their own and figuring out how the world works. Whether it be putting a puzzle together or building big structures and they fall down and then they do it again. Unfortunately, we have very little time for that kind of activity."

What else they would like to do

Educators reported a desire for more classroom time to devote to cognitive challenge opportunities. In addition, they hoped for more administrator buyin and opportunities for professional development around integration of cognitive challenge.

"Getting K-12 administration to sort of understand what early childhood should look like would help."

"PD [Professional Development]...with some make and takes would help."

Cognitive Challenge-After Workgroup

How integration has changed since the toolkit workgroup experience...

Respondents reported engaging in more child-led activities to promote cognitive challenge since they began their workgroup experience. A few individuals reported pushing themselves beyond their comfort level to try new strategies that they had learned. In addition, some individuals reported making curriculum choices more focused on meeting children's interests in order to help them push their critical thinking skills.

"I've had to push myself more because I feel like I've been teaching long enough now where I'm like, I know this works this is how I do it...it has helped me to think of different ways to do things."

Collaboration among Peers-Before Workgroup

How integration is happening

Strategies shared included: allowing children to work together during activities as well as giving children a goal and objective to work towards together. Play-based learning strategies were often cited.

"I think it looks like giving examples of appropriate interactions. We're using social stories, we have several social emotional curriculums that we implement...really try to teach empathy and build community in my classroom."

What else they would like to do

Respondents desired more administrator buy-in and more time to allow for peer collaboration opportunities to occur.

"Just the time, really the time to make it happen would really be nice to allow for it"

"To educate the people that are enforcing all of this to happen, the curriculum, the time constraint, if they are really educated on the benefits of all this [peer collaboration]."

Collaboration among Peers-After Workgroup

How integration has changed since the toolkit workgroup experience...

Discussions related to this essential experience focused on an increase in intentionality. Cohort members discussed trying to be more intentional about providing opportunities that allow for peer to peer interaction.

"I've become more mindful of how I have the kids interact with each other, not just letting them go off and do it [activity]. Thinking of different techniques I can do and making it more meaningful.

Child Decision Making and Planning-Before Workgroup

How integration is happening

Respondents reported utilizing child choice when making lesson decisions. There was a common desire to allow children to feel "in charge" of their learning.

"Allowing children to have the chance to make decisions and feel like they are contributing to planning things in the classroom."

What else they would like to do

There was a desire for increased administrator buy-in and more time to focus on what children were interested in learning.

"I would give kids more opportunities to play together and to make choices about how they want to learn about something."

Child Decision Making and Planning-After Workgroup

How integration has changed since the toolkit workgroup experience...

Cohort members report they are now more comfortable with giving up control and allowing children to help plan their day. There was an overall increase in child autonomy that was frequently mentioned.

"Releasing that control and letting kids strive for learning because it might cause a mess, or it might cause an opportunity to problem solve or something like that that, people get anxious. They're [children] fully capable of it and they're telling us what they need and want. For me, I've seen a lot of room for growth in my program to be able to say like, here's all the benefits of that child directed learning, and here's how you can do it."

Child Initiated Exploration and Innovation-Before Workgroup

How integration is happening

Strategies such as providing hands on learning opportunities and providing activities based on child interest were cited. Allowing opportunities for children to ask questions and make predictions were also reported.

"Having a variety of materials that kids can explore and create with."

"It's about children bringing the ideas to the forefront and then teachers following their lead."

What else they would like to do

There was a desire to increase parent education of the value of learning through play. In addition, increased opportunities for child play and a reduction of curriculum expectations were desired.

"Parents don't understand what we're doing and how much they [children] are learning from exploration and how much they are learning not only that social interaction, that cognitive development, they're learning so much from those exploration pieces."

Child Initiated Exploration and Innovation-After Workgroup

How integration has changed since the toolkit workgroup experience...

Cohort members reported they were trying to be more intentional in giving children opportunities to learn from one another. In addition, cohort members reported trying to provide chances for children to be autonomous and seeing the value of children making mistakes and learning from them. A few cohort members did report they were confused on the difference between exploration and innovation.

"A lot of my kids were having trouble finishing tasks and initiating things because they're afraid they are going to make a mistake. I feel like the research really helped me promote a growth mindset around that and how to do that."

QUESTION #2 HOW DID THE WORKGROUP EXPERIENCE INFLUENCE PERCEPTIONS RELATED TO LENS OF THE CHILD?

Lens of the Child Before Workgroup

How integration is happening

Lens of the child was described as an understanding of how a child experiences and sees the world. Respondents reported strategies such as providing children with autonomy over what they are learning and opportunities to talk and interact as examples of utilizing the lens of the child.

"I feel like it is how they experience the world. It's amazing to me even after I think we've had a bad day they are like, no we had fun today..so see it through their lens."

What else they would like to do

Some individuals did not share additional information related to what else they would like to do. Those that did, reported a desire to continue to improve their empathy and understanding for the children they work with.

"I'm really trying to hone in on this and really explain..that's really something I try to work on"

Lens of the Child-After Workgroup

How integration has changed since the toolkit workgroup experience...

Respondents reemphasized a drive to always try and see things through the lens of the child. Some educators reported enhanced empathy to be a result of their workgroup experience. Others reported that the workgroup experience helped them to reflect on how a child would see and experience typical classroom routines.

"They played a video like within one of the first few sessions and it was like from the lens of a child, it was like when my teacher tells me to catch a bubble, they feel silenced. And I think that was a really eye opening video to have shared because when they're getting in line or when you're teaching and you're just like, okay, catch a bubble, like, voices off I am talking. You're not able to hear it from their point of view."

QUESTION #3 HOW DID THE WORKGROUP EXPERIENCE INFLUENCE INDIVIDUAL BIASES?

Perceived Biases- Before Workgroup

How integration is happening

Educators reported trying to always ensure children were being treated equally and receiving an equal opportunity in their education regardless of their demographic characteristics.

"Just like making sure that as an educator, we're giving each student an equal opportunity to get the best education and the best support possible."

What else they would like to do

Educators desired strategies to continue to improve their ability to treat children equally no matter the child's background or what they learn about the child.

"To not let the things that parents tell me affect how I treat the child or how I treat the parent and treat them all with respect and dignity."

Perceived Bias- After Workgroup

How integration has changed since the toolkit workgroup experience...

Workgroup members were split when asked about how the workgroup experience influenced perceived biases. Some individuals felt there was limited discussion on biases while others felt there was a large focus on biases. Overall, individuals reported a desire to continue to work on their own biases.

"I feel like during the group, like this was just kind of gone over, I feel like it wasn't there. It was brought up and moved on. I kind of feel like there could have been more with this aspect of it just because I feel like it is a really big one."

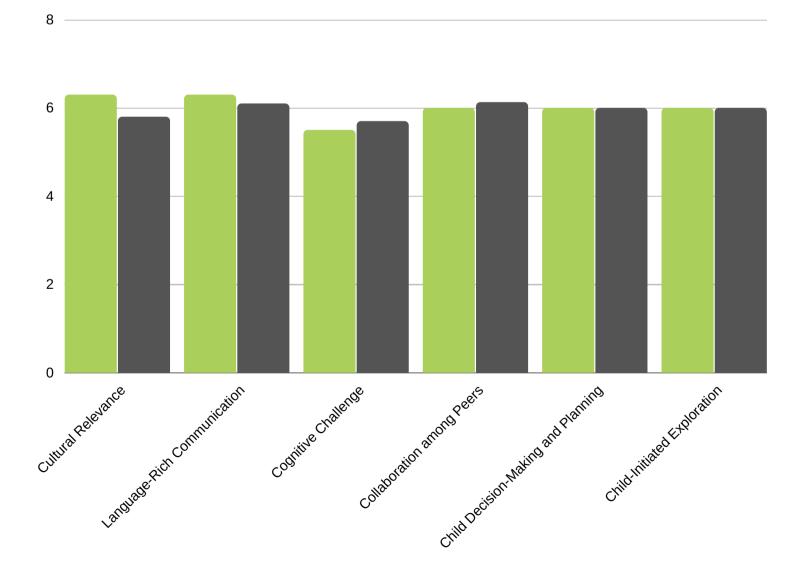
"We actually spent a really long time talking about biases, so that was good."

"I don't feel like mine has changed as must as just maybe being more cognizant of it, to realize it's out there and to realize that it comes in many different forms then I was actually thinking of before."

QUESTION #4 HOW DID THE WORKGROUP EXPERIENCE INFLUENCE CONFIDENCE IN EDUCATORS' ABILITY TO INTEGRATE THE SIX ESSENTIAL EXPERIENCES INTO THE INSTRUCTIONAL ENVIRONMENT?

Confidence to Integrate Essential Experiences into Early Childhood Practice

Cohort members were asked to rank their confidence to integrate essential experiences into early childhood practice on a scale of 1 to 7 (1, low, 7, high) at two time points (before the program via focus group and after the program via survey. Levels of confidence for integration were similar before and after workgroup implementation. In general, respondents felt confident in their ability to integrate each essential experience. with an average score of 6 out of 7.0 identified in the pre-program focus groups and 5.9 out of 7.0 in the post-program survey. In the post-program survey respondents were also asked to identify confidence in their ability to integrate all six essential experiences into the learning environment simultaneously. Respondents reported a mean confidence level of 5.8 out of 7.



QUESTION #5 HOW DID WORKGROUP LEARNING TAKE PLACE?

Workgroup members (n=13) completed the Experiencing Scale in June 2023 (Stock & Kolb 2021). Items that represent Novelty are highlighted in blue, items representing Presence are highlighted in red and items representing Embodiment are highlighted in dark green. Mean scores on a reverse order scale of 1-7 (1, low, 7, high) are reported. The mean score for novelty items was 6.46; the mean score for presence items was 6.29 and the mean score for items reflecting embodiment was 5.67.

Mean



Figure 1. The Experiential Learning Cycle (Kolb, 2015)

Wican			5) ()
6.38	I saw things in new ways	0 0 0 0 0 0	My views did not change
6.38	It was fresh and new	0 0 0 0 0 0	It was pretty much as I expected
6.62	I learned something new	•000000	I didn't learn anything new
6.31	I was deeply involved	0 • 0 0 0 0 0	I was uninvolved
6.31	I was alert and aware	0 0 0 0 0 0	I was easily distracted
6.54	I actively participated	•000000	I did not participate
6.38	My senses were engaged	0 0 0 0 0 0	My senses were not engaged
6.46	I was fully present	0 0 0 0 0 0	I was somewhere else
6.38	I was "in the flow"	0 • 0 0 0 0 0	I felt resistant
6.54	My attention was focused	• 0 0 0 0 0 0	I felt connected and whole
6.39	I felt connected and whole	0 0 0 0 0 0	I felt scattered
6.25	I was in the here and now	0 • 00000	I was in the there and then
6.38	I responded to what was happening	0 • 00000	I was on "automatic pilot"
5.54	I was not self-conscious	0 0 0 0 0 0	I was self-absorbed
6.00	I didn't notice the passage of time	0 0 0 0 0 0	I was aware of time passing
5.46	I felt a sense of oneness with the natural world	00 0000	I did not feel a connection with the natural world
5.67	I felt the experience in my body	0 0 0 0 0 0	I had no bodily sensation
5.67	The experience was emotional	0 0 0 0 0 0	I had no emotional reactions

QUESTION #6: WHAT IS THE FEASIBILITY OF TOOL IMPLEMENTATION?

Specific to the tools developed within the workgroup, the majority of participants felt confident they could implement these tools in their own early childhood practice and typically cited numbers between 4-5 when presented with a 1-5 confidence scale. The developed tools were described as unique, innovative and interesting.



I do a lot of trainings with teachers and I definitely feel like I could use them [developed tools] in some of my trainings.



Participants were also asked to share any anticipated barriers they thought might occur when asking an individual not currently engaged in the workgroup to implement the tools. The main thematic finding was related to resistance to change. This was discussed specific to administrators and parents. Specifically, there was concern that administrators would not be interested in supporting new strategies and not all parents would agree with a tool and it would keep an educator from trying it. Additional barriers cited included time constraints, technological literacy and budget limitations.



I think sometimes the principals or administration or the districts have just fallen into a rule of doing what they've been doing so having these tools that are different...if we bring those up, it's just going to be like o we don't need that or we don't need to do that.





The time constraints and work with the curriculum guide, the schedule, you have to have your class on, we don't have time for that.



QUESTION #7 IDENTIFY BEST PRACTICES AND BARRIERS TO WORKGROUP PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

WHAT WERE THE WORKGROUP SUCCESSES?

APPRECIATION FOR GROUP DYNAMIC

The majority of participants appreciated the diversity of the cohort primarily related to educator type. Individuals enjoyed getting to learn from an educator that worked in a setting that differed from their own. Cohort members described one another as validating, trustworthy and supportive. In addition, cohort members appreciated the opportunities to collaborate with other cohort members and learn from their experiences and backgrounds.

"I thought it was really interesting because I haven't really networked with many people in a daycare center...so it is really interesting to hear those points of view."

"I think everybody, all of that worked together, I think we collaborated really well and we were very respectful and everybody was willing to ask questions, answer questions and share."

INSTITUTE COLLABORATION AND WORKGROUP STRUCTURE

Participants enjoyed in-person interactions and felt that they were productive during meeting times. Participants also appreciated the reminder emails and follow up that Institute staff members provided. Institute staff members were described as organized, helpful, open to hearing new ideas and adjusting their strategies accordingly.

"They are very open to new ideas, as you're creating the tools, we're each kind of going our own way. They were able to take a minute to understand where we are coming from with our ideas, like kind of take it in and then give feedback based on that."

"I felt like I could reach out to them [Institute staff] at any time. They obviously know because an educator, we don't have a lot of time. So they would accommodate around our schedule which I thought was very, very nice and helpful".

WHAT WERE THE WORKGROUP CHALLENGES?

UNCLEAR PROGRAM EXPECTATIONS

Participants desired increased clarity upfront related to program expectations and outcomes. Some participants felt confused about the overall program objectives. Other individuals reported confusion due to the jargon utilized at the beginning of the program and desired further wording clarification.

"It was really difficult for me to understand if the objective was for it to be teacher facing or child facing. I think we lost a lot of time in just not understanding what the objective was for what were doing at a given time."

"A hardship I faced was that I didn't always feel like I knew what I was supposed to be doing or if I was doing it correctly. Also, I came into this knowing I was building a toolkit but at some point I felt it was a professional development I was trying to learn from instead of trying to help build it [toolkit]."

"The challenging part for me was, I felt like the beginning paced well but towards the end, the last few sessions, we jumped ahead and were assigned things we weren't quite sure about..it would have been nice to have examples and a better understanding of what the expectation was."

LACK OF TIME /TIME COMMITMENT

Individuals felt there was too much to accomplish during the workgroup period and too large of a time commitment was required outside of meetings. Some individuals desired more in-person work time to get tasks done however others felt the time commitment overall was too much. Several individuals did not feel they had enough time to complete their tools and desired more time to review tools at the end of the workgroup experience.

"I do think that at points there were times, having our day-to-day professions as well as tasks that they were giving us outside of the meetings, I felt sometimes that was kind of a lot to handle."

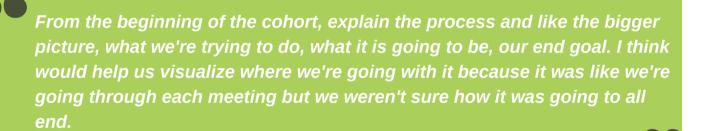
"It was like if you can commit to this time and date then please be a part of this. But it didn't say you're going to have to take this many hours outside of this time to do things and that was really a struggle for me."

WHAT ARE THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT?

IDENTIFIED RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were given when asked how to improve the cohort experience for future workgroups:

- Make all meetings in-person
- Enhance clarity on requirements of tool development
- · Reduce utilization of academic jargon
- Focus on one tool rather than multiple tools
- Provide time to look at tools at the end of the workgroup experience
- Increase session duration





We could have used more time to look at everybody's tools, it's nice to be able to see it in-person and ask questions.



Some of the terms they used, where they knew what they meant but I was like, what does that mean?





Maybe a little more time on those last 3 sessions...when we got to those hour and a half sessions it was like warp speed.

CONCLUSION

Overall, engagement in the Instructional Toolkit workgroup increased cohort members' awareness, intentionality, comfort and empathy within their instructional practice. Specifically, cohort members reported an increased awareness of the need to acknowledge a child's cultural relevance and the value of peer-to-peer verbal interactions. There were reports of increased intentionality related to providing opportunities for cognitive challenge and peer-to-peer interactions. Related to comfort level, cohort members reported increased comfort in their ability to relinquish some control and allow children to support lesson and activity planning. Finally, cohort members reported increased empathy related to the child experience and a reinforced desire to utilize the "lens of the child".

Cohort members were split when asked to consider how their individual biases were influenced by the workgroup experience with some individuals reporting increased awareness while others identified limited change.

Related to cohort member confidence to integrate essential experiences into early childhood practice, responses did not vary greatly from pre to post program however confidence levels were high prior to program onset. When reflecting on the learning experience, the Experiencing Scale identified cohort members had high incidence of presence, novelty and embodiment. These findings indicate cohort members were very engaged in the learning process.

When considering workgroup experience facilitators and barriers, the workgroup dynamic was considered a programmatic success. Workgroup members greatly appreciated the variety of provider types involved in the workgroup. In addition, the BECI staff were applauded for their responsiveness, support and flexibility. Challenges discussed included: unclear program expectations and a lack of time to achieve the set objectives.

Cohort members gave several suggestions for programmatic improvement. These largely focused on logistical enhancements such as making all meetings in-person, increasing the duration of meeting times, decreasing the utilization of academic jargon, enhancing objective clarity at program onset and allowing more opportunities for in-person tool review at the end of the workgroup experience.



Mr. Jason Buckingham Superintendent

Dr. Aaron Bredenkamp Assistant Superintendent for Business

Dr. Anne Harley

Assistant Superintendent for Teaching & Learning

Elementary Instructional Coaching 2023 - 2024

Teachers Currently Serving

- 17 General Education Teachers
- 2 English Learner Teachers
- 3 Specialty Teachers (Physical Education, Art, and Vocal Music)
- 5 Special Education Teachers
- Total: 27 Teachers

Students Directly Served

- Blumfield 304 Students
- Meadows 64 Students
- Mockingbird 432 Students
- Seymour 287 Students
- Wildewood 109 Students
- Total: 1,196 Students

Instructional Coaching Practices Feedback

- Quarterly Staff Surveys
- Biweekly Coaching Meeting reflection forms
- Monthly Mentor/Mentee Feedback
- Beginning of the Year Survey

Coaching Cycle Data Collection

- Pre-, mid-, and post data collection
- · Formative, Summative, and **Observational Assessments**
- Instructional vs Non-Instructional Time
- · Teacher vs Student Talk time
- Positive vs Corrective Feedback
- And more dependent on goal.

Coaching Cycles

- Each educator in their 1st, 2nd, or 3rd year to Ralston participates in biweekly check-ins with the instructional coach that focuses on student-centered goals developed by the teacher in collaboration with the coach. The instructional coach and the teacher develop a plan of action to work towards the goal through shared research and resources, planning, modeling, co-teaching, and observations.
- The goal of instructional coaching: To promote data-drive, reflective practitioners that will continue to impact future generations of students in Ralston Public Schools.

Achievement. Character. Technology.